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ABSTRACT

This report re-examines previously gathered ethnographic data derived from approximately 3,000 hours of interviews with migrants across the United States to determine what factors associated with migration affect children's educational outcomes. The data suggest the existence of a "culture of migrancy," which is manifested in similar attitudes, lifestyles, and behavioral patterns among migrants of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the three major migration streams. The survival-oriented priorities of the culture of migrancy make all migrant children potential dropouts. Migrant children are affected by poverty, poor living conditions, isolation from mainstream society, fragmented education received between moves, and low self-esteem related to the trauma of moving. A migrant child's success or failure in the educational system is related to the emotional and economic support available to the child, the child's decision-making power, and the child's economic contribution to the family. Migrant education programs differ greatly among states and often are not coordinated with other social services. The seven chapters in this report define the migrant population, outline the ethnographic methodology used, discuss migrant lifestyles and living conditions in home-base states and "upstream" states, describe the move from the first kind of state to the other, examine role relationships and social behavior among migrants, detail the component parts and services of the Migrant Education Program, and highlight national questions of educational policy. (SV)

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THE EFFECTS OF MIGRATION ON CHILDREN:

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

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To our children . . . Rejoice we've conquered!
and
Paula . . . who made it possible.

4

PREFACE

Since coming to this country in 1975, I have seen many changes in Migrant Education, both in Pennsylvania and nationally. However, I am proud to have been part of a project which has seen the gathering of the richest data ever gathered in two decades of the migrant education program.

As you read *The Effects of Migration on Children* you will be as moved as I was to read the feelings and hopes and dreams of the migrant families and the migrant children themselves. You will experience as I did the power of their message to all of us who work for migrant children. Joe Prewitt-Diaz, Bob Trotter and Vic Rivera have managed in their reanalysis of the ethnographic data to identify the "culture of migrancy" with striking clarity and documentary definition.

As seen in Chapter 6, the role relationships among migrant families and their interaction with institutions affects not only their perceptions but their behaviors as well. All of this is significant information to a program that hopes to impact the future of migrant children.

Some powerful recommendations emerge as a result of the findings. Those recommendations and conclusions are contained in Chapter 8. These findings are most meaningful because they represent a very concentrated 5 person-years of study on the findings of the ethnographic research.

As State Director of Pennsylvania Migrant Education, I am most proud to share this consummate look at our families with you. The stories of migration are the stories of hope, hope for a better life. They are the dreamers. Let us pray that we are the dreammakers.

Manuel A. Recio, Ed.D

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

For all their generous help, we would like to thank Lawrence Mach, who edited the first draft of this book. Deborah Williard for editing the subsequent drafts of the book and for her understanding of the topic that is discussed herein. Her suggestions were invaluable.

The ethnographic materials utilized in this book were collected by Mary Felegy, Marcela Gutierrez-Mayka and Anita Wood. This year-long effort has provided the readers with a basic understanding of what we have called in this book "the culture of migrancy" Without their dedicated efforts this book would not have been possible.

To Dr. Elizabeth Blue Swadener, Dr. Murry Nelson, Dr. John Wood and Dr. Cathy Small who provided valuable feedback regarding the chapter on ethnographic methodology as a research tool.

We appreciate the comments and suggestions provided by Paula Errigo-Stoup, Director of the Identification and Recruitment Project, June Purvis and David Gutierrez.

Ray Melecio prepared the graph in Chapter 2, and Joe Marrone a new friend, provided technical assistance every time we experienced problems with the Macintosh. Without Joe's help this book would not have been possible. To all our appreciation.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to share with the readers a re-analysis of the data of an ethnographic study that was conducted by three ethnographers to determine adequate practices in Identification and Recruitment of migrant children in the United States. Two previous publications (Reed, 1987; Trotter, Wood, Gutierrez-Mayka & Felegy, 1988) discuss the findings of the ethnography in terms of the qualities of a good recruiter and a definition of the administrative needs of the program in order to facilitate recruitment of migrant children.

The data that were collected yielded much information about migrant lifestyles, reasons to move, and a picture began to emerge about another culture which has not been often talked about: **the culture of migrancy.** The authors have re-analyzed the data focusing specifically on information that will assist the reader to understand the behaviors, motivation and lifestyles of migrants in the United States.

This report is especially powerful because it does two things. It documents what many professionals in the field had been talking about for the last 23 years since the inception of the Migrant Education Program. It takes all the information collected in the ethnography, some 1,000 pages of anecdotes and direct quotes from informants, and organizes it into a sequence paralleling the process which a migrant follows in relocating from home-base to where the crops are available for picking.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part consists of one chapter. The first chapter addresses the type of persons that compose the culture of migrancy. It points out that migrancy is a common phenomenon in this nation. One in every three children migrate at least three times during their school life. However, most of those dislocated belong to the middle classes or the urban migrants and have more access to the services, schools and facilities that create a stabilizing factor in the home for the children. Many of these migratory moves have been planned and the children have been part of the decision-making process. While parents have control of the move, the migrant child does not have the luxury of deciding when to go, where to go, or what to do once s/he gets there.

The chapter defines the population which composes the three migrant streams. It further provides a definition of who the people are and where they have come from. The first chapter attempts to assure the reader that although migrants come from many different countries, cultures, and geographic locations in this country, they have something in common: the culture of migrancy. The ethnography reports similar behavioral patterns among this diverse population across the three migrant streams.

Part II of the book consists of one chapter. Chapter 2 discusses the methodology used to gather the data analyzed in the book. Ethnography was used to gather baseline data about migrants and their way of life. Three ethnographers spent the better part of a year living with migrants, learning their ways. They recorded the information, sought to validate the information with key informants, and then compared notes to determine the internal validity of the data that were gathered. Through case histories, structured and nonstructured interviews and participant observation the ethnographers were able to document for the first time an account of what is referred to in this book as some of the elements that constitute the culture of migrancy.

Part III consists of four chapters. Each chapter discusses in depth an aspect of the cultural patterns of migration. In each chapter the authors were able to describe common behaviors among the migrants studied in the three streams.

Chapter 3 discusses migrant lifestyles before the move occurs. It indicates the lifestyle in the home-base states. The data suggest that most people migrate for economic reasons. However, once we looked closer at the quotes from the ethnography, we were able to identify other reasons: better schooling for children, making money to send home to the family, wanting children to improve their English language skills, better medical facilities or simply the desire to move.

Chapter 4 discusses the move. Detailed information is included about the process of moving from the home-base state to the upstream state. A discussion of the preparation is followed by a discussion of the uncertainty of what is awaiting the migrant family upon arrival at the new destination. The types of migrant cycles are explained. Some people migrate throughout several states; others migrate within the same state; and yet others seem be exist in perpetual motion.

Chapter 5 addresses living conditions in upstream states. The chapter discusses housing and services available to migrants and their children. Most importantly it describes the powerlessness migrant workers feel. They are victims of external environmental controls; yet they manage to survive. Therein lies the mystique of migrants. Much optimism is expressed in this chapter. One can almost feel the excitement of encountering the unexpected and experience the frustration of traveling for days to work hard for hours to barely make ends meet. This chapter hints at the decision-making power that migrant children have with regard to whether they stay in school or decide to work in the fields. The services that the children are provided in school are briefly discussed.

Role relationships among the migrants are discussed in Chapter 6. The roles and norms for social behavior of migrant children, women and men are discussed. The discrepancy between migrant behaviors and those of the static population are noted. While teachers reported that migrant parents did not want to get involved with their children's education, migrants were reporting factors that inhibit their visit to school: long working hours, lack of knowledge of English and lack of transportation are reasons frequently given. By age fifteen children make decisions that will affect their lives. Some become successful; others remain in the cycle of migrancy. This chapter depicts the behaviors which distinguish this group from others and thus begins to provide some insights into the culture of migrancy.

Part IV consists of two chapters. Chapter 7 provides an in-depth discussion of the programs available to migrants. The Migrant Education Program and its component parts is detailed in depth. The discussion in this chapter explains the need for recruiters and other migrant personnel. The chapter addresses the services offered and almost defines, by describing the changing role of the program, the need for improvement in certain areas. However, the authors did not feel that the role of this book was to suggest direction for that changing role.

The final chapter summarizes the chapters presented previously and concludes by answering some of the questions that have been set forth in the national agenda for Migrant Education. While we do not delve into a discussion of policy, some of the statements made in this chapter may be construed by the reader as statements suggesting policy at the national level. Whatever the perception of the reader, of one thing we are sure: the program, as it is structured currently, is serving the needs of the stable population. More and better programs must be developed to serve the educational needs of children living in the culture of migrancy.

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PART I

Part I of this book introduces and explores the topic of migrancy. This Part includes the chapter that sets the stage for the remaining three parts of the book. The first chapter contains demographic data regarding the phenomenon of migrancy and identifies categories of migrants in the United States. Chapter 1 also includes definitions of terminology specific to the phenomenon of migration and descriptions of patterns of migration.

Chapter 1

THE IM/MIGRANT POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Migration in the United States consists of large internal migration coupled with immigration. For the purpose of this book, migrants are defined as those persons who are agricultural laborers who travel within the geographical boundaries of the continental United States. Events of the 1970's and 1980's resulted in a re-characterization of immigration and migration and produced dramatic national and regional demographic changes. Bouvier and Agresta (1987) report that approximately 6.6 million immigrants have entered the United States since 1970. These immigrants can be classified into four categories: 1) legal immigrants, 2) refugees, 3) undocumented workers and 4) internal migrants whose native language is other than English. It is important to note that these classifications are not mutually exclusive. Overlapping can be seen in the following descriptions.

Legal Immigrants

Hodgkinson (1986) notes that in 1979, 42% of legal immigrants came from Latin America and 42% came from Asia. The National Coalition of Advocates for

Students (NCAS) (1988) reports that the majority of persons that came from Latin America were from Mexico and Central America. By 1985, a significant majority of the immigrants legally admitted to the United States were from Mexico, Central America and the Philippines (NCAS, 1988).

Asian immigrants came from Vietnam, the Philippines, Korea, China, India, Laos, Cambodia and Japan (NCAS p. 4). Chan and Kitano (1986) report that by 1980 an influx of 250,000 Koreans, 360,216 Filipinos and nearly 300,000 Vietnamese changed the character of the Asian-Pacific American population. Generalizations regarding Asian immigrations can be misleading. Chan and Kitano (1986) report that the term "Asian-Pacific American" refers to a diverse group of people with origins from a large geographic area (p. 2). Tsang and Wing (1985) indicate that most Asian-Pacific Americans are foreign born. However, this notion must be interpreted carefully. Most of the Japanese are likely to be native born and speak English as their first language. On the other hand, Korean-Americans and Vietnamese-Americans are likely to be foreign-born and speak a language other than English as their native language.

While Latin Americans and Asians constituted the majority of legal immigrants to the United States in the 1970's and 1980's, an increase in immigrants from Jamaica, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic has been noted by immigration authorities and reported in the popular press.

Refugees

With the increase of armed conflicts in different parts of the world, the United States has become the final destination for many refugees. Most noted among these refugees are the Cubans, Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodians and most recently the Nicaraguans. In the last several years, an influx of people from Central America has also been recorded (NCAS, 1988).

While these refugees have sought sanctuary in the United States, they often feel displaced in their newfound country. The following quote from the ethnography illustrates:

> ***I cannot tell you if I like Garden City or not. I have no impressions. Garden City, New York, California. It is all the same. It is not my homeland, not my home and so I have no feelings about it. This is only the place where I live, but Viet Nam is my home. I will act like an American while I am living here, but in my heart, I will always be Viet-***

> *namese. You cannot change what is in your heart and in your mind.*

Coupled with the ambivalence many refugees feel upon their resettlement in the United States is their struggle to contend with the memories of the past. Chinn and Plata (1986) observe that many refugees endured incredible hardships, and were deprived of food, shelter, and education. Likewise, the children suffered. Some children endured traumas of semi-starvation and relocation camps and witnessed the killing of parents and other family members. Chinn and Plata indicate that without question, some children carry with them the emotional scarring which could have a profound effect on their behavior.

Undocumented Workers

The number of undocumented workers in the United States fluctuates between two million and five million. The majority of undocumented workers are from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

Internal Migrants

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) (1986) reports that the population of the United States is geographically mobile. The mobile population which migrates within U.S. borders are termed internal migrants. The last three decennial censuses indicate that about 50% of children 5 to 14 years old have changed residence in the five years preceding the census. These moves would not be disruptive if the child moved within the same school district. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) (1986) reports that many moves involve a different school district, with all the disruptive consequences of losing old friends and adjusting to new surroundings, both in and out of school.

. . . many moves involve a different school district with all the disruptive consequences of losing old friends and adjusting to new surroundings, both in and out of school.

Sub-categories of Internal Migrant Populations

The migrant population can be divided into sub-categories. These sub-categories can be defined by location or ethnic background.

Urban Migrants

Many persons have moved into large industrial areas and have become urban migrants. In the early 1900's, industrialization and mechanization of farm work prompted mass urban migration. Two trends in early urban migration can be noted. One is migration from rural areas to large industrial centers. The second trend is migration from the South to northern urban centers. As the economy changed in the early 1960's, these trends declined. However, after the Vietnam conflict a large number of refugees populated urban centers. Urban migrants undergo adjustment problems upon relocation. These problems include, depression, isolation, and loss of self-esteem.

Rural Migrants

While millions of internal migrants moved into populated urban centers, about two million people lacking technical skills have become rural migrants. Early migrant populations in the United States moved from Southern states to Northern states. Most recently the moves have not been as clear-cut. One thing is certain, the Northern states are losing population while large numbers of internal migrants have moved from one urban center to another.

The main source of sustenance for rural migrants is agricultural work. There are no exact figures as to the number of migrant farm workers. However, the estimates range from one to five million. The Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) currently maintains records of 469,016 children.

The Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) currently maintains records of 469,016 children.

The early migrant farm workers on the West Coast were Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos and Mexicans. A second group was composed of Blacks on the East Coast. The third group were Spanish-speaking migrants from Puerto Rico and Texas. This latter group moved into the Mid-section of the country. By 1966 there were migrants from each of the ethno-linguistic groups in all the states. These major ethno-linguistic groups are discussed below.

Blacks

In the first decade of this country, Blacks, primarily from Florida, moved to the Northeast. The predominant place of their resettlement was New York. Later Blacks from other Southern states moved to industrial centers in the North.

During the 1930's, the cultivation of winter vegetables in Florida attracted Black workers from other Southern states to Florida (Young, 1968). Migrant Blacks became a significant part of the farm labor force in the South. In subsequent years, this work force moved to the Northern states. The pattern continues today, although a marked decrease of Black migrant workers has been noted.

Mexican-Americans

Mexican-American migrants are predominantly from Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California. The Mexican-Americans comprise the largest group of Hispanics in the United States. There are approximately 13 million Mexican-Americans. There exists no reasonable estimate of the percentage of Mexican-Americans who are migrants. However, the MSRTS reports that about 60% of all migrant children accounted for by the system are Mexican-American.

Puerto Rican Americans

Puerto Ricans comprise the second largest Hispanic group in the United States. Their migration to the mainland began after World War II and constitutes the first airborne migration to the United States. They settled in the Northeastern states, as well as in Illinois and Michigan.

Anglos

About 20% of migrant farm workers are Anglo of European extraction. They are located predominantly in the Northern states (Washington, Idaho, Montana, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Maine). This population works primarily on dairy farms or on farms where they pick crops.

An example of this Anglo migrant population is a group of bikers in Idaho. The following illustrates the lifestyle of one of these groups:

> *Recruiter: We have what I call "biker migrants" living over here (he pointed to a trailer park). They are Anglo, and the wives pick fruit. They are real young.*
> *Ethnographer: What do the husbands do?*
> *Recruiter: They work on their choppers. The families are real young and very supportive of education.*

Social and Educational Background of Migrants

Migrant groups differ in social and educational background. Wallace (1986) found that while many Asian and Hispanic American migrants have some knowledge of English, recent arrivals are not literate in any language. For some, this condition is a result of their social and economic status. For others, illiteracy results from the disruption of education caused by frequent moves or political turmoil. Other reasons for illiteracy include origin in countries where there is a strong oral tradition of language learning or cultures that possess no written language. Haiti, Khmer and Hmong are three examples of these groups.

The social and educational background of migrants results in school-related problems for their children. Jiobu (1988) reports that Vietnamese and Mexican-American students undergo similar processes in their adjustment to the U.S. schools. The problems encountered by these students include ignorance of the school system, difficulties in language learning, and adjustment to the school and community environments.

Although migrant children do adjust to the educational system, this adjustment is not without complications. The NCAS (1988) suggests that migrant children upon arrival to new sites are at a disadvantage compared to children who have spent their entire school life in one school system. Language, culture shock, strange environment, advanced age in the grade level and involuntary migration are factors that adversely affect migrant children.

. . . migrant children upon arrival to new sites are at a disadvantage compared to children who have spent their entire school life in one school system.

Patterns of Migration: Three Streams

Migration, return migration, transient migration and circulatory migration are the four prevalent patterns of migration that exist in the United States. In order to comprehend these patterns of migration, it is important to understand the terminology associated with the move.

A ---------------> B

Migration

A---------------> B
<---------------

Return Migration

A -----------------> B ------------------> C

Transient

A----------------> B
<----------------
------------------>
<------------------

Circulatory Migration

Figure 1: Graphs of four types of migration

"Migration" refers to a move from one region or part of the country to another.

"Return migration" refers to the return to the region or place of origin (home-base) after the first move.

"Transient migration" refers to the movement to a second or subsequent locations.

"Circulatory migration" refers to the continuous back and forth movement from place of origin (home-base) to other locations.

The following experts from the ethnography illustrate the migratory patterns previously defined.

Migration

> *My husband was working as a bank teller in Mexico. We made enough money to pay for our food but there was no future for our children. We decided to come to California to pick crops because we can make more money here. The children are learning English in school, and they will be better off. This is the first time we came over here.*

Return Migration

> *I came from Puerto Rico with my husband and the children. At first I didn't like it here, but the farmer has given my husband the opportunity to drive a tractor. So we are going to Puerto Rico for the winter and return here next year.*

Transient migration

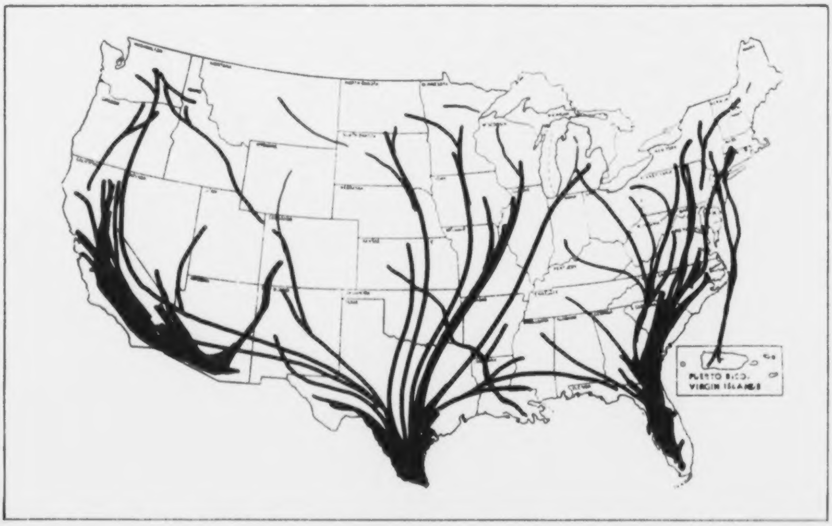
> *Ethnographer: Why do you have to move back and forth?*
> *Ans: It was my father's idea. He got tired of one job and went to another, got tired of that and went somewhere else. He took us to different farms, I guess he wanted to try them all.*

Circulatory migration

> *Well, we've been migrants, well since grandfather used to be a migrant in 1948. We have been going to S, NE, like I said since my grandfather started. And they said that they used to carry me, you know, ever since I used to be a baby. And then I went with my own family, dad and mom, you know, and then they quit going so I started going with my own family, going over there and working and everything. But I guess we been doing that most of our lives, huh?*

Migrant Streams

Not only are there four prevalent patterns of migration but King-Stoops (1980) identifies three distinct streams of movement of migrant farm workers: the Eastern stream, the Mid-continent stream and the West Coast stream. The map below illustrates the traditional migrant streams identified by King-Stoops.



Map 1: Shows the traditional pattern of migration identified by the U.S. Government

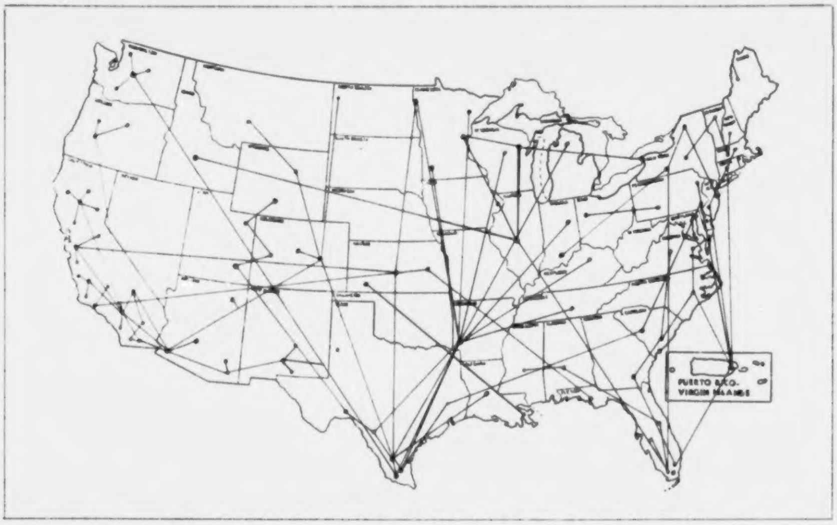
The current study has identified the emergence of new migration patterns.

The Eastern stream is made up of Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, Anglos, Canadian Indians, and Blacks. This stream flows up and down the region east of the Appalachian Mountains.

The Mid-continent stream traverses the Mississippi River basin. This group is primarily composed of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans, Blacks and most recently Vietnamese and Cambodians. These migrants move in all directions to and from regions in Texas.

The West Coast stream is a great migrant movement extending from California and Arizona to Oregon and Washington. This stream is comprised primarily of documented and undocumented Mexicans, Central Americans, Vietnamese and Filipinos and other Western Pacific immigrants . The current study has identified the emergence of new migration patterns.

As the map below indicates, these new patterns are not as distinctly defined as the patterns within the traditional streams.



Map 2: Shows the current patterns of migration identified by the ethnographic data

In the study reported herein three states from each of the streams were utilized: the Eastern stream (Florida, Massachusetts, and New York); the Mid-continent stream (Texas, Kansas and Illinois); in the West Coast stream (Arizona, California and Idaho).

The majority of migrant workers are American citizens and therefore are eligible for all the services provided in the home-base as well as upstream.

Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the migratory nature of the United States. Migratory movement is clarified, and a background is provided regarding the national origin of the migrant population currently involved in farming or fishing activities. While most migrant children are Hispanics, there are large numbers of Blacks and Asian-Pacific Americans. About 20% of the migrants are Whites. The majority of migrant workers are American citizens and therefore are eligible for all the services provided in the home-base as well as upstream.

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PART II

Part II consists of a chapter which explains ethnography. Ethnography was used as a tool to gather information to establish a preliminary description of one cultural segment of society in the United States: the culture of migrancy. Since no definition or description of the culture of migrancy exists, ethnography is the most appropriate research tool to document aspects of this culture. Without this description it is impossible to determine whether the Migrant Education Program is accurately assessing the needs of and providing adequate services to children of migrants.

Chapter 2

ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnography as a Scientific Method

Ethnography is a scientific method of recording people's beliefs, behavior, and culture directly from life. It is a highly intimate process. Werner and Schoepfle (1987) indicate that ethnography is a full or partial description of the activities of a group; in this case, cultural patterns of migrants in the three streams. Ethnographers become a part of the communities they study. They spend weeks getting to know people, and months observing behavior, asking questions, and getting in-depth interviews about various subjects.

Ethnography is a scientific method of recording people's beliefs, behavior, and culture directly from life. It is a highly intimate process.

Ethnographers spend time recording direct naturalistic observations of people's behavior. They spend even more time interviewing "key informants", people in the community who are knowledgeable about the group's customs, habits and work. They learn what the community or group considers to be proper behavior and the proper way to do important tasks. Ethnographers ask indepth questions of large numbers of informants over a significant length of time to be confident that the answers they are receiving are true and not merely what those being interviewed think they want to hear. One of the objectives of ethnographic research is to learn so much about the lifestyles of the people under study that ethnographers can participate in community events without making mistakes (Goodenough, 1980).

The information collected by the ethnographers and reported in this document falls under 1) the guidelines of the Privacy and Confidentiality Act of 1964, 2) privacy and confidentiality guidelines, as well as 3) the code of ethics of the American Anthropological Association and the American Psychological Association (American Anthropological Association 1983; American Psychological Association, 1985). Therefore, the authors followed standard procedures in this report. They used pseudonyms for both the individuals interviewed and for the various states in which the interviews took place. To avoid compromising the informants, information identifying particular people and places was not used.

The Structure of the Identification and Recruitment (I&R) Ethnography

The ethnographic data supporting the Identification and Recruitment (I &R) project's objectives was divided into two linked, but separate parts: programmatic or state-of-the-art ethnography and focused ethnography

The Programmatic Ethnography

The programmatic ethnography sought to identify . . . profiles of ideal recruiter attributes and skills for Migrant Education Programs.

The programmatic ethnography studied the recruitment process. It identified the major models used by education programs and identified the processes used to train and supervise staff for migrant identification and referral. Nine states agreed to participate in the first phase. These states were representative of migrant education programs in the United States. The migrant populations of these states represent about 75% of all migrant farmworkers. The programmatic ethnography also identified barriers that preclude providing educational opportunities to migrant children. The findings from the programmatic ethnography are summarized in a report prepared by Reed (1987) for the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Migrant Education.

The programmatic ethnography sought to identify ideal recruitment models. It also attempted to identify profiles of ideal recruiter attributes and skills for Migrant Education Programs. In the process, the ethnographers scientifically reconfirmed the need for

I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

—Im/migrant in the U.S.
—Previous reports
—Education Materials
—Interview with Experts

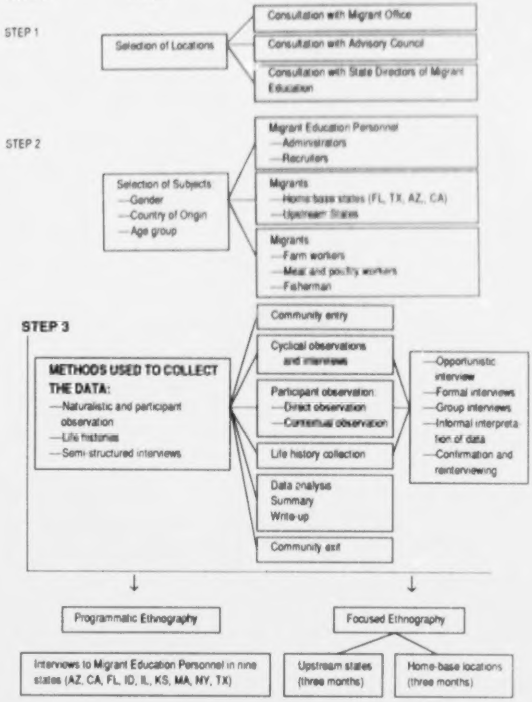
OBJECTIVE:

To gather information about the opinions, attitudes, and needs of migrants in the three migrant streams.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

—Demographic Data regarding the incidence of migrancy in the U.S.
—National Reports on Migrants and Education
—Mental Health and the Migrant Child
—Educational Strategies
—Current Policies

III. FIELD WORK DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES



WHEN — WHAT — HOW

STEP 1

Selection of Locations

Consultation with Migrant Office
Consultation with Advisory Council
Consultation with State Directors of Migrant Education

STEP 2

Selection of Subjects
—Gender
—Country of Origin
—Age group

Migrant Education Personnel
—Administrators
—Recruiters

Migrants
—Home base states (FL, TX, AZ, CA)
—Upstream States

Migrants
—Farm workers
—Meat and poultry workers
—Fisherman

STEP 3

METHODS USED TO COLLECT THE DATA:
—Naturalistic and participant observation
—Life histories
—Semi-structured interviews

Community entry
Cyclical observations and interviews
Participant observation
—Direct observation
—Contextual observation
Life history collection
Data analysis
Summary
Write-up
Community exit

—Opportunistic interview
—Formal interviews
—Group interviews
—Informal interpretation of data
—Confirmation and reinterviewing

Programmatic Ethnography

Interviews to Migrant Education Personnel in nine states (AZ, CA, FL, ID, IL, KS, MA, NY, TX)

Focused Ethnography

Upstream states (three months)

Home-base locations (three months)

IV. FINDINGS OF THE ETHNOGRAPHY

3,000 hours of interviews, observations, life history records, and participant observations

Data stored on 47 5 1/4 inch floppy computer disks

V. ANALYSIS OF THE ETHNOGRAPHY

Programmatic ethnography (Reed, 1987)
Focused ethnography (Trotter, et al. 1987)

VII. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

—Migrant lifestyles
—The move
—Conditions for migrants upstream
—Role relationships of migrants
—Recommendations of research, policy and education

outreach in Migrant Education Programs and documented some of the characteristics of the Program that make it both desirable and unique among educational programs in the United States. The data from the programmatic ethnography were also used to develop much of the direction for the field ethnographies conducted with the migrant farmworkers at their homes and work sites.

The Focused Ethnographies

After providing the programmatic data for the preliminary development of the project training materials, the ethnographers began a focused ethnography of the beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes of migrants toward education, the schools, and migrant education programs. This part of the ethnographic research included direct observation, interviews, and analysis of the behavior of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in migrant camps, home-base housing, and migrant work places in each of the three major migrant streams.

After learning what migrants did when they were at their home-base, the ethnographers traveled upstream and actually lived in labor camps. The ethnographers became knowledgeable about migrant farm labor lifestyles due to the number of questions they asked and the number of recorded observations they made.

The purpose of the focused study was to identify key variables that either supported or impeded the efforts of the Migrant Education Program nationwide.

The purpose of the focused study was to identify key variables that either supported or impeded the efforts of the Migrant Education Program nationwide. There was a need to know the migrants' views of education. Not knowing the migrants beliefs and behaviors surrounding their relationship with available educational opportunities would be like developing a product, no matter how useful or desirable, without conducting the necessary market research to find out how to present this product to potential customers. The I & R project, for the first time, conducted this necessary form of research.

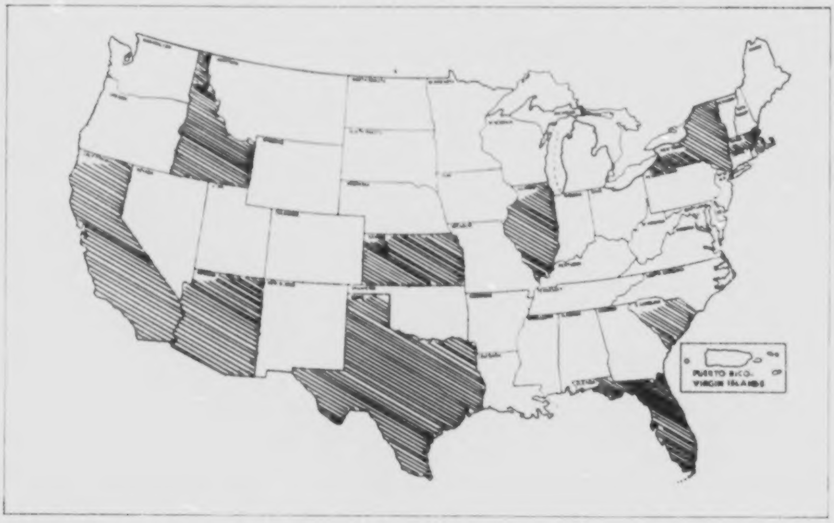
The data gathered by the ethnography gave the researchers and the professionals in the field a view of key migrant education issues from the perspective of the service providers and of the migrants. This balanced approach is critical for a realistic view of the Program and for rational policy development.

Additional Background Information on the Ethnographies

The I & R ethnography was organized and conducted by four anthropologists trained in ethnographic data collection and analysis. The research was conducted in ten states: Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, New York, South Carolina, and Texas. A final report was prepared (Trotter, Wood, Gutierrez Mayka, Felegy & Reed, 1987) and submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Migrant Education

Location of the Ethnographies

The programmatic ethnography was conducted in the states of Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, New York and Texas. The ethnographers traveled with recruiters and observed their daily activities, including their interactions with the state officials, local school district personnel, and migrant and seasonal farmworkers in their areas (Adler & Adler, 1989). This phase of the project lasted for approximately three months and produced essential data on the types of Migrant Education Programs that exist, the models used for administrative organization, ideal profiles of administrators, norms or profiles of rules and regulations critical to the migrant education program, as well as an ideal portrait of a migrant education recruiter/home-school liaison.



Map 3: States included in the ethnographic study

Following the completion of the programmatic ethnographies, the anthropologists spent six months of focused field research on migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families. These in-depth studies depended on the establishment of a high level of trust between the ethnographers and their informants. Significant time was spent in each state selected for this phase: Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, and New York. South Carolina was also visited by one of the ethnographers while participating in a migrant family's move from Florida to a camp in South Carolina.

The first field sites for the focused ethnography were home-base locations. These were all communities where substantial numbers of migrants live and think of as home. The ethnographers spent from 2 to 3 months in each home-base site, then shifted their studies to upstream states, as the migrants they were interviewing began their annual round of migration. In a couple of instances the ethnographers traveled with the migrants they were interviewing in the home-base to upstream locations.

Classic Ethnographic Methods

This form of participant observation provided the environmental framework for understanding the relationships between migrant farmworkers and the institutions they encounter in places where they live and work.

Three classic ethnographic methods were used during the ethnographic field work conducted for the I & R project. These methods were 1) naturalistic and participant observation, 2) semi-structured interviews and 3) life histories (Agar, 1987).

The participant observation phase of the ethnographies included such diverse activities as spending days with migrant recruiters, living in migrant households, working in the fields along with the migrants, and moving from a work location in a home-base state to a camp in an upstream state. During and after each of these activities, more than 3,000 hours of observations of peoples' lives were recorded. This form of participant observation provided the environmental framework for understanding the relationships between migrant farmworkers and the institutions they encounter in places where they live and work.

The semi-structured interview phase was interwoven with the participant observation. Semi-structured interviews are those in which a specific set of open-ended questions are asked, but where the interviewer takes advantage of volunteered information to ask additional questions generated by the interview itself. During the semi-structured interview phase of the project, formal, prearranged interviews with adult family members and migrant children were tape recorded and transcribed. Opportunistic interviews that were not pre-arranged but focused on one of the topics under study were also recorded. These semi-structured interviews with migrants in their homes, on the road, and at work produced hundreds of hours of answers to important questions.

The opportunistic interview not only provides answers to the questions that researchers believe to be important, it also uncovers issues that the informants believe to be important. Since the purpose of the study was to discover what migrants think and do, semi-structured interviews avoided the problem typical of social science survey research: getting accurate answers to the wrong questions. Another strength of this approach is that ethnographers were still able to get the answers to questions that the researchers and migrant I & R experts felt were important.

Collecting life histories was the third major component of the research effort. Life histories are descriptions, in the "key informants" own words, of the every day processes and the major events in the lives of people in a community. The numerous migrant life histories collected by the I & R project provided a critical framework for understanding the lifestyles and the life events that are important to migrant farmworkers.

The total ethnographic data set was the result of more than 3,000 hours of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and life histories. The ethnographers lived with migrant families for weeks at a time, recording most of what they saw and heard. They set up interviews, worked in the fields, traveled, and observed migrant children in various programs, in the camps and at home. The ethnographers' "field notes," stored on 47, 5¼ inch floppy computer disks are the equivalent of about 1,400 single-spaced type written pages of field data. This report summarizes the data.

The total ethnographic data set was the result of more than 3,000 hours of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and life histories.

Stages of the Ethnographic Research

Typically, ethnographic research has five stages: (1) entry into the community; (2) initial observations and interviews; (3) information review and confirmation; (4) increasingly intensive and focused interviews on selected topics; and (5) exit from the community. In all cases these are cyclical, not linear processes. At any given time, the ethnographer is not only collecting new information but also reviewing field notes and going back to key informants to either confirm, modify, or reject their interpretations of what is occuring.

Even the process of entering and leaving is not a linear one. Ethnographers continually meet potential informants, and for each new person there is a repetitive process of explaining who you are, what you are doing, and what will happen to the information you are collecting. Leaving a community is not simple either. The very nature of ethnography causes the researchers to bond with the people they are studying. These bonds, like all friendships, are not easily severed. Most ethnographers develop life-long relationships with key informants.

The following summarizes the processes used by the ethnographers to collect data for the project.

1. Community Entry

One problem that ethnographers are trained to solve is explaining to people what he or she is doing in the community, why he or she is collecting information, and what he or she is going to do with the information.

In this project, the ethnographers identified a key person who could introduce the ethnographer to a small circle of friends and acquaintances. During the programmatic ethnography, the ethnographers moved into the communities only after they had been in the state for some time working with the Migrant Education Program. Since that Program had already established contacts with individuals in the communities, these networks were used for initial interviews, and for observation. Since everyone knows many other people, the anthropologists worked their way through social groups, finding more and more people to talk to, and being allowed into more and more homes and work sites. This process took considerable time since virtually no one was willing to talk in depth about his or her educational experiences on the first visit. Time, familiarity and "going with the flow" were needed until enough rapport was established that the ethnographer could take out a note book or turn on a tape recorder.

Once the primary barriers were down, the ethnographer was able to return and gather much more information from the informants. The ethnographer was trusted, and people were excited that their views would be recorded and heard by the people who support, create, and run Migrant Education Programs. This is a common reaction to ethnography. People are often pleased that an ethnographer cares enough to ask them about their lives. This reaction often changes their reaction from indifference or hostility to openness and cooperation. Once trust is established, information pours out. Once community leaders were convinced that the ethnography could be beneficial, they would often take on the role of explaining why the researcher was present and why it would be a good idea for people to cooperate. While it often took time for people to become comfortable enough to talk honestly, the general reception of the ethnographers was positive.

2. Cyclical Observations and Interviews

After contacts had been established, and confidence in the ethnographers was developed, the data went from a trickle to a flood. The most intense cyclical part of the research was begun. The ethnographers gathered initial data, asked for confirmation, discovered areas that needed to be researched in depth, and began the intensive data review process.

a. Naturalistic Participant Observation

Participant observation is the foundation of ethnographic research (Bernard, 1988). In this project, each ethnographer spent hundreds of hours directly observing what migrants did and said during their daily lives, while they worked, and when they interacted with other members of society. The ethnographers were especially interested in migrants' relationships with the educational system in their home-base states and migrant education programs in upstream states. These observations were recorded in detail as a part of the ethnographer's field notes; the raw data recorded directly during the research process. The notes were then reviewed and analyzed for regular patterns, as a part of the total ethnographic assessment.

. . . each ethnographer spent hundreds of hours directly observing what migrants did and said during their daily lives, while they worked, and when they interacted with other members of society.

Two types of observations are recorded by ethnographers in their field notes. One is contextual observations. The other is direct observation and recording of key behavior. Contextual observations explain either the physical or the social context of any conversation or interview. Without this type of anchoring observations, it would be much easier to take what the migrants say out of context. The following is an example of a contextual observation:

> *J: We have to come here to work and maintain ourselves. If we stayed there we couldn't eat and clothe our children. Here we have jobs.*
> *OBS: This is Saturday and J is not working. She said that there was no work for her today, or she would be working. I asked her if they were able to go back with any money, and she said very little.*

What follows is an example of the second type of observation, direct observation and recording of behavior. The second form of observations were recordings of either physical surroundings, such as the vivid description of migrant housing, or recordings of observations of people's behavior. An example of this type of data recorded is:

> *OBS: I went out to the camp early in the morning to visit the place where the parents left the children when they went to work. These children were older, and there was a building where they could stay from 7:00 AM until the bus arrived. The children had to walk down the hill and wait for the bus, and until last week they had done that. In this building they were able to draw and work on their writing and then the aides, some of them mini-corps, some with a program called Pupil, walked them to the corner where the bus picked them up. M was in charge of the school. The camp was making a parking lot so that the bus could come up the hill to pick up the kids. Starting next week they were going to have a school here in the mornings from 7:00 until 12:00 for the children who were not in summer school in the district.*

b. Interviews

Ethnographic researchers spend much time "hanging around" in situations where they are able to observe important behavior and interview people doing the things about which the ethnographer is interested in learning. They also set up formal interview sessions with people whom they know well enough to be confident that rich, accurate information will be provided. Two types of interviewing, opportunistic interviews and formal interviews, form the basis for the data collected in the ethnography.

1. Opportunistic Interviews

In some types of research, accidental encounters with people who could provide vital information are not considered part of the data collection process. However, in ethnographic research, these encounters are recorded. The purpose is to build up as broad and deep a base of descriptive information as possible, to make sure that no leads to important areas of information are lost, and to help confirm that the themes that the ethnographer describes are as accurate and representative as possible.

In the following case, a project ethnographer was at a Migrant Education Program meeting, interviewing one of her informants. The opportunity arose for her to approach members of the informant's extended family.

> *Mother wanted her children to get an education so they would improve themselves. She said she*

> *wanted something better for her children than the work in the fields. I asked her what was wrong with the fields. She said it was hard work and always moving. She said she hoped her children had the "brains" to finish school and do better than she and her husband. I asked her if she was going to have more children. She said she did not want any more. She thought it was hard enough as it was to feed them and clothe them, and having more would not make it any easier.*
>
> *Standing next to her there was a young couple. I asked them their ages. She was 19, and he was 22. They had gotten married a month ago in Texas, and she was 3 months pregnant. I asked her if they will go back to Texas to have the baby there. She said they liked it here, and they would like to stay through the winter. They would go back to visit their families, but then they would come back to NY.*

These children formed a part of the first informant's network. In the interview, as hinted in this excerpt, they confirmed that while the primary informant had many ideals, most of them were already not being met within her extended family environment. This allowed comparison of peoples' ideals and hopes with their actual situations. Ethnographers are responsive to such serendipitous interviews. The general purpose of these interviews is to confirm information from other informants or to explore areas requiring more research.

2. Formal Interviews and Key Informants

In-depth interviews are the backbone of ethnographic research. Project ethnographers arrived at their first field site with questions and areas for recorded observations that had been created by members of the project advisory board, project staff and the ethnography group. They pursued these questions while remaining open to issues of importance to their informants, issues which might have been overlooked by the experts.

It is common for ethnographers to record dozens of conversations with the same informant. Some are broad explorations of the areas of culture under study. Others are confirmations or re-examinations of earlier statements. The latter serve to clarify or check accuracy and validity of information. Interviews with key informants span months as more and more information is collected, recorded and confirmed.

Ethnographers commonly conduct semi-structured rather than unstructured or fully structured interviews. While the ethnographer has a series of pre-written questions to be asked, the questions are open-ended. Open-ended questions allow informants maximum leeway in the topic of discussion. Moreover, the ethnographer has the option of asking additional questions during the interview that help clarify answers. The pre-written questions used by project ethnographers during their initial semi-structured interviews are found in Appendix A.

Under certain circumstances project ethnographers allowed the interviews to go off in unexpected directions to explore interesting or promising answers to their questions. The answers ethnographers received from initial questions sometimes indicated they were asking the wrong question, or asking the right question in the wrong way. In some cases, informants simply could not answer the question as it was asked; and in other cases, they provided the interviewers with a better question.

Many interviews were recorded verbatim using a tape recorder. Others were recorded by jotting down notes during the interview. Still others were written by the ethnographer after the interview. The reasons for these different approaches are simple. People willing to give information are sometimes unwilling to do so with a tape recorder running or when someone is taking notes. In such cases, notes jotted down after the fact are better than losing the information altogether. The ideal is to get the most accurate verbatim recording possible, but other forms of data collection provide useful information as well. Both types of interviews may occur with the same informant and are useful for double checking information collected from others or for capturing additional details.

Comparison of these types of interviews reveals differences in informants. Some provide wonderful detail. Others must be guided. Some informants require probing questions for the ethnographer to find out what they are really saying and what the information means. A strength of ethnographic interviews is that while they allow people to make their own uninterrupted statements, they also allow active intervention on the part of the interviewer to extract the basic information needed in the ethnography.

3. Group Interviews

Ethnographers often use a variation of the semi-formal interview, the group interview. Many ethnographic interviews are conducted in natural settings (people's homes, in the fields where they work, and at school). The ethnographer is rarely alone with an informant, so many interviews turn into group interviews, whether or not they started out that way.

Group interviews allow informants to express themselves in a comfortable setting. They also enable ethnographers to explore diversity of opinion, as well as consensus. People interject their views into the interview, even though they are not the primary informant. If they agree with the informant, they provide additional confirmation about the subject. If they disagree, they provide important information about the intracultural diversity surrounding that subject.

Group interviews . . . enable ethnographers to explore diversity of opinion, as well as consensus.

A good example of the deliberate use of a group interview situation is recorded in this excerpt of an interview conducted with migrant children. The overall purpose of the interview was to determine how they felt about moving and to determine their long-range educational aspirations.

> *Q: How about you? What are the major disadvantages to moving?*
> *G: Getting used to a different place and different people and different cultures.*
> *Q: Are you used to doing that? Do you have to learn how to do that, does it take a special attitude?*
> *G: Not really, but it's different . . .*
> *Q: Do you think in the future that will help you . . . having had that experience of moving and having to learn how to do all these things, and having to adapt to these new situations, and different neighborhoods, different schools, different friends? Do you think that will help you in the future?*
> *V: Probably.*
> *Q: How could you use that experience?*
> *G: Like if you change your mind and get a job . . . putting you as an example, you could say how you traveled and what it did for you, getting used to certain kinds of things . . .*

The answers show the complexity and depth of issues that migrants face, as well as the assumptions that they take into account in making key life decisions. Sometimes, it takes several interviews to clarify a fairly simple subject.

4. Informant Interpretations of the Data

One important interview technique ethnographers use is to have informants interpret their own behavior, ideals, and beliefs or the behavior of other people. In the following segment a young woman is reflecting on the different social settings where she and her family speak either Spanish or English.

> *Mom: I know she does talk better than M, even than me! I know, I can see the way she talks English she doesn't have to stop and think what she's gonna say, she just keeps on saying whatever she's gonna say, she don't have to think about it. But here at home I do talk Spanish because my mom doesn't speak any English. And I do talk Spanish all the time with my husband too. But in Ohio, over there with our boss, he says 'Don't talk in Spanish because you're probably talking about me and I don't know it!' And I say 'No, don't worry, we're not talking about you all!' But then my husband says 'Go ahead, talk to me in English, or they're gonna think we're talking about them.' So I have to talk to him in English over there. But when we get home, we start talking Spanish! [laughs] And our boss there, he went to school for college for 2 or 3 years there for Spanish. And he can handle Spanish pretty good. You know he can make himself understood pretty well. But he say 'You better talk slow, 'cause you talk too fast and I cannot understand you at all!'*

5. Confirmations and Re-interviewing

Another crucial interview technique is to return to informants to re-ask important questions and to confirm earlier statements. A characteristic of ethnographic interviews is the ability of the ethnographer to follow up on questions over a long period of time. Sometimes in the press of the interview, the ethnographer misses something important, or later discovers that he or she should have asked for clarification. Ethnographic interviewing is designed to overcome the weaknesses of one-time interviews. Field notes are read on a daily basis, and notes made to return to an informant for further information as soon as possible (Goodenough, 1980). The following field note segment illustrates this point.

> *I asked Mrs. B. about something she said to the recruiter the other day with regard to the bilingual program back in TX. She told me at first she agreed to have her son J in a bilingual class to teach him to read in Spanish. She thought since the boy was "mejicano" he should know Spanish. But then, she and her husband noted the boy was doing poorly in English and was getting confused between English and Spanish. So they went to talk to the principal of the school in TX and told him they did not want J to be in the bilingual class anymore.*

> ***Since they pulled him out, his mom says he's doing much better.***

In the instance cited above, the situation was such that it would have been unacceptable to have asked these questions during an earlier interview. Instead, the ethnographer completed the first interview but came back later to explore issues that couldn't be discussed at that time.

c. Life History Collection

A life history is a record, in the informant's own words, that recounts an important part of his or her life story. A complete life history is rare, because it takes many interviews and recountings of events on the part of informants as well as intensive analysis on the part of the ethnographer to assure that all of the key events in the informant's life have been recorded. Most ethnographers collect focused life histories instead; histories of special events or narrowly defined areas of an informant's life.

Focused life history accounts are very valuable for two reasons: they reveal what events an informant thinks are crucial to his or her personal development; they provide a context that helps in the interpretation of beliefs, attitudes, and current behavior. The ethnographers collected life histories that gave important insights into why migrants joined the migrant lifestyle and what events structured their migrations.

Life histories . . . provide information that is especially useful in matching policy analysis and policy development to the reality of migrant life.

Life histories have historical events, but informants tend to jump forward and backward in time with confusing results if there are no follow-up interviews to eliminate the problems this creates. Life histories often have many themes and information based on beliefs and attitudes interspersed in the historical account. This juxtaposition is very useful. During the analysis stage of the research, these data can be related to key events, themes, and processes in migrants' lives. These provide information that is especially useful in matching policy analysis and policy development to the reality of migrant life.

d. Data Analysis, Summary, and Write Up

One of the greatest strengths of ethnography is the researcher's identification of repetitive information that best describes the way most people think, believe, and behave. Once sufficient field data are collected, ethnographers search the data for themes, commonly held beliefs, similarities of behavior, and common ways of expressing ideas.

In the ethnography, multiple examples of all important findings from the study were scattered throughout the data. The process of data analysis required the ethnographers to identify themes and patterns, as well as variations on them. When a theme became apparent, it was presented back to key informants for confirmation. In the following quote, one ethnographer asks her key informant for confirmation of a theme discovered by another ethnographer, namely the influence migrant children have in the decision to stay in school or drop out.

> *M: You know that Latin parents are very . . . the kids do what the parents say, but in education the role is reversed. Have you noticed that?*
> *Q: Yes, I've noticed it. It's interesting to hear you say it. The three ethnographers have picked that up that in education, the children have a very strong say . . .*
> *M: Yes, they can almost make the decision. If they don't want to go to school, they don't. This family in B, the son is 13, he dropped out of school about 2 years ago when he was 11. And I said: why? He doesn't go to school now? No, he doesn't want to, he just refuses, he says he hates it, he doesn't want to. So, he's home all year, what does he do? Well, he's home and he helps with the baby . . . you know . . . nothing . . .*

A particular quote is a composite of dozens—even hundreds—of similar quotes.

The quotes in this book are typical of the responses of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the various migrant streams. These quotes are not merely the beliefs of a single person but are representative of many. Ethnography offers the opportunity to discover shared cultural beliefs and ideas expressed in the words of a representative individual. A particular quote is a composite of dozens—even hundreds—of similar quotes.

Summary

The observations and interviews collected by the I & R ethnographic research process covered a wide variety of topics. After studying the answers and piecing together the observations from all of the migrant streams, three areas emerge that are critical to understanding the process of providing educational services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers. These are the migrants' life conditions, both at home and upstream; the migrants' attitudes towards educational processes and the benefits of education for migrants; and the structure of the Migrant Education Program itself. The details of this study are presented in the chapters that follow.

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PART III

Part III examines three factors that affect the mental health of migrant children and shape the culture of migrancy. These factors are 1) variables operating prior to migration, 2) variables operating during migration, and 3) variables operating after migration. Chapter 3 discusses migrant lifestyles before migration, during migration and after arriving at the work site. Chapter 4 discusses the move. Chapter 5 discusses variables operating after migration, the conditions of migrants upstream and the role relationships of migrants. Chapter 6 discusses the role relationships of migrant workers, their children, and the social environment.

Chapter 3

MIGRANT LIFESTYLES

The principal reasons migrants move from one area to another or from one state to another are to find work, to get better pay for their work or to better their economic situation (Davis, Haub, & Willette, 1983; Hispanic Policy Development Project (HPDP), (1984) An Arizona migrant worker put it succinctly:

> *Ethnographer: What are some of the advantages of moving?*
> *M: The advantage to moving is that we can work. Over there (at their home-base) we can't work. Only that.*

The principal reasons migrants move from one area to another or from one state to another are to find work . . . or to better their economic situation . . .

Economic conditions at home are a major cause of migration. Most of the migrants' home-bases (places they consider to be permanent residences regardless of how long they live there each year) are rural, agriculturally-dominated and economically depressed areas. In a few cases, home-base areas are economically depressed urban areas, where people with rural backgrounds have moved in search of work but have not found it or have found only part-time employment.

It is possible to have an "urban" home-base but to work as a seasonal and migratory laborer for most of the year. One can live in the barrios and ghettos of Chicago, Miami, New York, Houston and Los Angeles or in the rural counties of Florida, Texas, California and be a migrant by doing seasonal day labor or by moving to nearby agricultural areas for a period of time. The lifestyle is the same. Migrants live in both urban and rural areas when working upstream. Recently, many migrants are living in upstream urban areas, especially where migrant camps have been closed in nearby rural areas.

The economic "push" to become a migrant worker is evident in the following report by one of many Algonquin Indians from Canada doing migrant labor in upstate New York.

> *I asked M what they did when they were in Canada. He told me he worked in construction, but most of the time he was unemployed. R did not work at all. M said a lot of the people from the reservation worked for [X] Farms; and since he was unemployed at the time, he decided to give it a try.*

Migrants working upstream, or "on the season" as they say in the Eastern migrant stream, must earn enough not only to survive upstream but also to survive when no work is available.

People migrate to make more money than they would at home. Migrants leave areas where there is little or no work. Work that is available often provides subsistence at best. Migrants working upstream, or "on the season" as they say in the Eastern migrant stream, must earn enough not only to survive upstream but also to survive when no work is available.

Work is primary for all migrants. Anything that interferes with work is avoided, delayed as long as possible, or dealt with in the most cursory fashion possible. This is true of health care, of dealing with social problems or with any social institution, such as meeting with school personnel to learn about a child's educational progress. Migrants only seek help when it is necessary. Even then, they try to keep it from interfering with a day's work.

Migrants are unable to control interrupting factors. Agriculture itself is inconstant. There is little security in migrant employment from month to month and season to season. Migrants recognize this volatility.

> *Mr. A said the migrant people are very uncertain when it comes to income: "The first couple of months they can make money, but that's all. And if it rains, and the crop is bad."*

Unpredictability affects all parts of migrants' lives, including education. Baca and Harris (1988) indicate that the greatest impediment to providing equal access to an appropriate education is the mobility of the population. The following quote from a student in a high school level, Saturday migrant education program illustrates the price paid by students when they migrate.

> *Like my cousin wasn't coming (to the Saturday program where the student was being interviewed), but he's coming now because he got behind. My cousin, he is the only one that is going to finish high school. The other two cousins are about 20 years. One quitted because of going to Florida and all that coming from here and over there he missed a lot of years of school, just going down. When he comes to a school, establishes in a school, they send him back in years. So he quitted because he was going back and not forward! Every year he loses another year. Like he gets out of school earlier 3 months, and then he gets over there in school, maybe he didn't go and he missed it all, so he was out of school. I don't know, he's getting the GED. It's not the same though, the same as a diploma. It's not the same because . . . having a GED is like having nothing.*

Home-Base Life Styles

Contrary to popular notions, the migrants studied in this ethnography are primarily U.S. citizens, not foreign workers. Nor are they shifting transients. They have a clear-cut home base area where they have permanent friends and family. More than half of all migrants own their own homes or have land on which they plan to build homes. The home of most migrants is usually a very modest single family unit. Establishing roots is important to them.

Migrant Farmworkers without Home-Bases

In addition to classic migrants (those who follow a circulatory pattern from south to north harvesting crops), the focused ethnography documented a set of migrants who do not have home-base locations in the normal sense. These migrants actually take their "home" (usually a car or motorcycle and a few possessions) along with them. One example of these migrants are the so-called "Biker" migrants in Idaho, where motorcycle groups move in for the fall harvest. They earn money to live, buy possessions, and improve their bikes. Then they move on to other areas and other jobs.

Unpredictability affects all parts of migrants' lives, including education.

Another example of migrants without permanent home-bases are those who, in many states, travel three or four times a year within a 50-mile radius to serve the dairy industry. Like other migrants, these nomadic groups include families with children who are in desperate need of education.

Such nomadic laborers face additional problems getting appropriate education for their children, since they have no home-base to which they return. There are some mechanisms (albeit difficult, time-consuming and not wholly reliable) through which they could be contacted. Most report having a friend or, more commonly, a relative with whom they are in periodic contact and who can reach them, eventually.

However, other than identifying their existence and the fact that they present an unusual problem for the educational system, we have virtually no information regarding the patterns of work or the numbers of these migrants. This is an area where further ethnographic exploration would be invaluable.

Foreign Migrants

The vast majority of migrant and seasonal farmworkers are United States citizens by birth . . .

Some of the agricultural workers in the migrant streams are from other countries. The predominant stereotype in the media and in the minds of most people in the United States is that these workers dominate the migrant population represent less than 15% of all migrants (Davis, Haub & Willette, 1983; Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1984). The vast majority of migrant and seasonal farmworkers are United States citizens by birth (Agreste & Bouvier, 1986; Angel & Tienda, 1982). Nevertheless, the I & R project ethnographers did encounter foreign workers, some documented and some who had entered the country illegally.

Green card workers migrate annually from Mexico to California (often with a short stop for a few months in Texas). They depend almost entirely on their period in the United States to pay for the trip back and forth and to support the entire family for the 6 months that they do not work. These families indicated that they could not find work in Mexico. Some worked briefly in construction or on small farms and in the fields, but the majority of the time there was no work due to current economic conditions in Mexico. The plight of many of these migrants is stated in the following quote translated from Spanish.

> *Ethnographer: What do you do in Mexico?*
> *Migrant: Nothing. My husband tries to get work but he hardly ever finds any.*
> *Ethnographer: How do you live without money in Mexico?*
> *Migrant: The little that we take back lasts us for awhile, but soon it is gone*
> *A man loans us money like the bank loans money, for food, rent and the trip back here.*

> ***Ethnographer: Is this a friend?***
> ***Migrant: No, an acquaintance. He loaned us $500 this year, and he charges 12% to 16% interest. This is less than the banks. We can choose to pay him back in three months or in six months. We usually pay him back in three months.***

This same family later decided to stay in California for the winter and look for work. The father told the ethnographer that it was too expensive moving back and forth. Another migrant from Mexico stated:

> ***We have to come here to work and maintain ourselves. If we stayed there we couldn't eat and clothe our children. Here we have jobs.***

Many foreign migrants said they wanted to remain in the United States during the winter months after the closure of the camps, but the expense of housing and lack of work prohibited them from doing so. Only if they return home during the winter months can they afford to live on the money that they earn. One Mexican migrant described why the move back and forth:

> ***If we stayed here all year we would have to pay $300 a month for rent. There is no work here during the winter. If we stayed in Mexico, we would not have money because there is no work in Mexico.***

Not all families come to the United States for economic reasons. Many come for political asylum and to escape war.

Some foreign migrants indicated they were skilled in nonagricultural jobs, but because of the economic crisis in Mexico they became classic migrants. Some reported this migration to be their first. On the other hand, one woman of 32 had been migrating for 12 years. She had attended secretarial school for 3 years in Mexico. She said that, at first, she didn't want to come but everything was arranged for her; so she came with her family. The ethnographer asked her if it wouldn't be easier to be a secretary. She agreed that it would, but she was not able to be a secretary in the United States without English skills. She told the ethnographer that she had a friend who worked as a secretary in Mexico, but she only earned $30 a month. Not all families come to the United States for economic reasons. Many come for political asylum and to escape war.

Immigrants

Both legal and undocumented immigrants have remained a consistent source of farmworkers in the United States. During the project, the ethnographers interviewed migrants from Canada, Haiti, Central America, and many parts of Southeast Asia.

Many immigrants are skilled workers who, because of language or social barriers, become migrants. Some see their stay in the United States as temporary (Cheng, 1987). These migrants hope to move back home when things improve. They state that while they will work hard and follow the rules of the land, their hearts will always remain in their homeland (Fitzpatrick, 1987). This attitude appears to be common among older adults.

On the other hand, many of the younger generation (children in school and young adults) want to make the United States their homeland. Their loyalty to our system often puts them in conflict with their parents. The adaptation process of second generation immigrants tends to present particular problems to children and to the receiving societies (Prewitt Diaz, 1987; Fitzpatrick, 1987).

The adaptation process of second generation immigrants tends to present particular problems to children and to the receiving societies . . .

One Vietnamese teenager discussed this issue.

> *It depends on how old you are when you left. Like I was too young, and I feel like my home is here and I feel like I'm not a migrant anymore. I feel this is my country, my city right here. But most people who left when they were older, they feel like they should just live here for a short time and then forget it, move back to Viet Nam. And that's why they always think they should move back to Viet Nam. They say 'I just move here for a short time and then I move back whenever the country is free.' It depend how old they were when they left. But it depend really, I think different people have different feelings. It's hard for them to accept a new culture like they have to change everything all around, but it's easy for me to change. . . .*

Adults do not always long for their homeland, nor are the children always content here. This portrait of a Mexican immigrant family includes a father who gave up a job as a bank clerk in Mexico to become a migrant laborer.

> *I expressed surprise at their decision to leave a secure, well paying job to come here and work in the fields. L said they left because there were no opportunities for her children in Mexico. I asked her if with the salary of a bank employee they could not afford to send the children to college. She laughed and said no. She told me her husband was making enough to eat and have a decent life, but that was all. They had a house of their own back there. In Mexico, school is free through secondary, but after that they have to pay to attend the "preparatoria" or prep-school if they want to go to college.*

> *L seemed very proud of her two boys and was not afraid to show it. I asked her if she thought her boys would get better jobs with their high school diplomas. She said they could get good jobs in factories and things like that. But she really wanted them to go to college. "SIEMPRE HE QUERIDO QUE TENGA SU CARRERA" [I have always wanted them to have an education] I asked her what they wanted to study if they went to college. L said both boys were very good at drawing. She thought they could be architects.*

Summary

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers have varying lifestyles and points of origin to the migrant streams. The large majority of migrant farmworkers in the United States are citizens with home-bases in rural or urban settings scattered across the country. The most common home-bases are in California, Florida, and Texas. These migrants start annual cycles of migration from these locations each year, and end up back at home base when the cycle ends.

Other migrants live in something like perpetual motion. They have no home-base, rather they move from place to place, calling each new location home. They often think of these new locations as a permanent location regardless of their recent past experiences in moving.

All of them experience the problems of dislocation which in turn affects the educational progress of their children.

Finally, the migrant streams provide work for foreign-born migrants. Some are temporary workers who annually return to their country of origin. Others are immigrants who join the migrant stream in much the same way as home-base migrants of longer duration. Some of these immigrant farmworkers are citizens: others are becoming citizens. Some are permanent visa residents who hope some day to return to their homeland.

All of them experience the problems of dislocation which in turn affects the educational progress of their children. Their expectations mold the way in which they interact with the educational system. The ultimate success of migrant education programs depends on understanding migrants' lifestyles and overcoming the barriers their lifestyle creates to the movement of their children through the educational system and into appropriate economic activities in our society. The ethnographic data collected by the I & R project illustrates these aspects of the culture of migrancy.

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Chapter 4

THE MOVE

Migrant lifestyles revolve around working, moving on to find other work, and working again. Chapter 4 describes typical migration patterns documented by the ethnographic study. It provides insights into the processes involved in deciding to move and insights into conditions encountered by migrants when they travel and when they settle into a new location.

Patterns of Migration

There are two principal migration patterns in each migrant stream, intra-state and interstate. The simplest is intra-state migration from one agricultural area to another.

Intra-State Migration

Intra-state migration patterns exist in all major home-base states. The move may only be to the next county, or as in Texas and California, migrants move hundreds of miles from their home-base without leaving the state.

The following interview describes typical intra-state migration for dairy migrants:

> *Q: Why does a family that works in the area have to move? Can you tell me a bit about the background?*
> *Sis: My father went from one big dairy to another.*
> *Q: How long did you work with this dairy? Are you still working with them?*
> *Sis: No, he went back and forth.*
> *Mr. D: Back and forth from the Lake up to M, K, P.*
> *Q: Always in New York state?*
> *Mr. D: Yeah.*
> *Q: Why did you have to move back and forth? Isn't there steady employment?*
> *Sis: It was my father's idea.*
> *Mr. D: Got tired of one job and went to another; got tired of that went back, back and forth like a yo-yo.*
> *Q: Because he didn't like the job?*
> *Sis: We never stayed in one town very long, even in school. You wouldn't believe how many schools we went to because we wouldn't stay in one spot.*
> *Q: Why didn't they stay in one spot?*
> *Sis: I don't know. . . .*

Q: But why the movement? I come from Florida and there they tell me there is a lot of movement in the dairy. They told me there are peaks in the production of milk and sometimes they need more workers than others. Is that the same way here? When is the peak of the milk production in NY? When do the cows give more milk, in the summer time or the winter time?
Sis: It varies.
Q: So, in the dairy that you worked in, was there a high turn-over rate of people, or was it always the same people working?
Mr. D: Always the same.
Q: But you tell me that your father used to go back and forth.
Sis: To different farms. I guess he wanted to try them all out.

The result of "trying out" all of the farms meant, in a fairly typical case, that the family moved at least on an annual basis, and frequently more often than that. It meant that the children changed schools "so many times you wouldn't believe it." And it meant that, even though they worked for the same company for their whole career and thought of themselves as permanent employees, that they were in almost perpetual motion within the state. These people are migrants even though they do not call themselves migrants and think of migrants as being "other people who move around a lot."

Interstate Migration

The second major pattern of migration is interstate—from one state to another. Such moves may be relatively short (between two adjacent states) or long (from the bottom of the country to the top). The length of a move depends on the crops worked and the pattern of a particular migrant group. The longer the migrants follow the crops for a particular season, the more moves they have to make, and the more states in which they are likely to work.

One ethnographer observed an interstate pattern that originates in Florida moves to South Carolina, and then, in stages, up the East Coast. Migrants following this pattern leave Florida by the middle of June and travel north to work in the Carolinas picking peaches and vegetables. By late August they continue up to Virginia to work the apple crop and then return to Florida. Others continue to New York State, or further north, following the tree crops for the fall harvest. The following is an interview with a Mexican-American crew leader taking workers north.

> *Q: How long does it take to get where you are going?*
> *A: If you go to Virginia it's further away. If you just go to Carolina (from Florida), it only takes 14 hours and from there to Virginia it's 9 more hours.*
> *Q: Do you always make the same stops?*
> *A: Yes, first in Carolina.*
> *Q: What do you do in South Carolina?*
> *A: Peaches.*
> *Q: And how long do you stay there?*
> *A: Until August 26. By the 26, 23, 24 depending on what's to pick, it's over.*
> *Q: And then you go to Virginia?*
> *A: Yes, to Virginia.*
> *Q: Does everybody go on?*
> *A: No, some people go back. There's people who go ahead to other jobs.*
> *Q: So not everybody goes on?*
> *A: Well, the majority goes on, but some people want to go back, or they need to go back to find housing. The rest continues up North. They already know where they are going, they know that in 2 weeks there'll be work somewhere else.*

With longer moves, things become more complicated. Migrants who follow this pattern are likely to stay upstream for several months, arriving at the beginning of the growing season (May) and staying until the beginning of winter (November).

The ethnography uncovered a recent change in the pattern of migration from Arizona to California. In the past, migrants lived most of the year, generally from September through April, in southern Arizona working the lettuce and other cool weather crops. After a short period of rest, the migrants moved to California to follow the lettuce or tomato harvest.

Recently, this pattern of migration has changed due to increased parental awareness of the advantages of keeping children in the same school all year. More and more children are remaining in school until its completion at the end of May. This trend, also observed in several other states, is one of the positive outcomes of the efforts of the Migrant Education Programs.

More and more children are remaining in school until its completion at the end of May. This trend, also observed in several other states, is one of the positive outcomes of the efforts of the Migrant Education Programs.

Now, the fathers leave Arizona sometime in April, as soon as work is completed there. They travel upstream, following the lettuce crop, finally settling in the "salad bowl", an area near the peninsula or in other nearby places in California. Typically, the fathers return to Arizona for the family when school was out in June.

Another example of a new migratory pattern in the United States comes is the increasing number of Vietnamese immigrants who are becoming migrant workers. In Kansas, these laborers move between two primary occupations, beef processing and fishing. Their migratory patterns are determined by the location of these two industries, and they concentrate in the states that most strongly support those industries: Kansas, Texas, or Louisiana. Many Vietnamese migrants who migrate from fishing boats on the coast of Texas to the beef packing plants of Kansas, and back again, depending on seasonal changes in these industries.

Reasons and Rationales for Moving

The ethnographic research shows that most people would not migrate if they had reasonable alternatives. For example, when asked about their desire to pursue migrant farm labor when they are adults, migrant students responded:

> *(Emphatic no's all around when asked if they would like to continue migrating when they had their own families)*
> *A: No, I wouldn't like to do it. I wanna get a good career and get a good job. That's what my brothers are doing. I have three brothers, two are in university, and one is in college. And they're getting a career. No, it wasn't all bad, but it's hard, and I still don't wanna do it.*

The research identifies two principal reasons migrants give for moving:

The basic reason for migration, underlying all others, is economics; the economics of individual migrant families and of the economics of the agricultural industry in our nation.

Economics

The basic reason for migration, underlying all others, is economics; the economics of individual migrant families and of the economics of the agricultural industry in our nation. Many of the migrants move so that their whole family can work. The differences in growing seasons, in the South and the North, allow migrants to find work upstream when there is none in their home-base area. Summer months upstream are a chance for the whole family to work and make money since children are out of school.

> *M: We travel to look for work, because we are not going to hold hopes of finding work here where we know there isn't any.*
> *Q: You know there is a time in the year where there's not going to be anything?*
> *M: We know. We know there isn't anything; we know we are going to be tight; we know many times there won't even be enough to pay rent. You are not going to pay rent with food stamps; so,*

> *you have to look. You have to look to find work. Those who don't have stable jobs have to go out and look.*

Some migrants are fortunate enough to piece together almost 12 months worth of employment. For example, migration from Arizona to California allows for the families to work almost the whole year. Migration enables these families to get ahead occasionally, something they would not be able to do if they remained in Arizona during the hot summer season when there is little agriculture.

A migrant from Arizona said:

> *We came here for my husband's work. We are building a house over there and if we come here we can save more money. We can take back some money to Arizona. We came here for the first time in 1981. We started our house over there three years ago. We are living in it and only need the sidewalks in order to finish it.*

Whether home-base is in the United States or in another country, the most common reasons given for doing migrant labor are lack of work or to escape poverty at home.

> *I asked Mr. R why they had come to the U.S. He said they came because they could earn more money here. He said there are no jobs in Mexico. I said the jobs they could find here, like working in the fields are hard jobs. Mr. R replied, 'Here it is difficult, but it is better than there (Mexico).'*

Another Mexican migrant worker in Florida spoke of poverty in Mexico.

> *Mr. M told me he and his wife used to live in a ranch in Mexico. He remembers how hard life was then. They did not have electricity so they had to use an oil lamp to light the house. Mrs. M said she and other women used to go up the mountain to get wood for cooking. Their house was made of adobe. To get to the nearest town to get supplies they had to walk 2½ hours to the road to catch the bus. The bus ride was another ½ hour. I asked Mrs. M if she would like to go back to live in the ranch. She said no, she would like to stay here because things are much easier.*

Within the United States, chronic underemployment and poverty force people who want to work to move to find it. This has been true throughout the nation's history. An ethnographer explored this subject with a Texas-based migrant.

Within the United States, chronic underemployment and poverty force people who want to work to move to find it. This has been true throughout the nation's history.

> *There aren't many jobs in Texas in the winter time. People survive on what they earned upstream. In 6 months a family of four can earn enough to live for the rest of the year.*
>
> *While they are in New York they don't pay rent nor do they have any major expenses. It is not uncommon to work 6 or 7 days a week or to work 10 to 12 hours when they are upstream. When they go back to Texas, they pay their large debts and budget the rest of the money to make it last for the rest of the year. 'Once school is out parents want children to work', Juan said. The main reason why migrants come up north is that there is work for the whole family. Kids as young as 9 and 10 are working whole days.*

Many people with jobs quit them to migrate in search of better opportunities. Working conditions and pay at their current jobs are often inadequate. Unfortunately, many are lured by promises of better pay or benefits, promises many farmers never fulfill.

(Anglo dairy migrant worker in New York)

> *Mrs. M told me the last farmer they had worked for had offered them free housing and utilities. A couple months after they moved in, the farmer decided to charge them rent, and later on he added utilities. After that they moved to a new farm"*

Fleeing War in their Homeland

In addition to economic problems, international migrants may be fleeing war at home. Once in the U.S. many can only find work as agriculture migrants.

> *I asked Mrs. S why they had come to the U.S. from El Salvador. She said her husband came to work in 1980. He came in illegally. The family stayed behind in El Salvador because the children were going to school there. Mrs. S said her husband wanted to come back but she told him not to. Things had started to get pretty bad there. Mother and daughter remember seeing planes flying over the village, and they could hear the bombs. Mrs. S said the bodies of young girls were showing up in the woods near the village. That's when she decided it was time to leave.*

The more sophisticated migrants go through a complex decision-making process. The process involves knowledge about the length of seasons, the timing of crops, and the changing condition upstream.

Deciding Where to Move, and When

Deciding where to go and when to move, involves more than the availability of work in a certain location. The more sophisticated migrants go through a complex decision-making process. The process involves knowledge about the length of seasons, the timing of crops, and the changing conditions upstream (crop failures as well as bumper crops). This latter information is based on word-of-mouth networks. The decision-making process can also require balancing a high rate of pay for a short season of migrant labor against lower wages in their home base, but longer employment.

Lengths of Seasons and Rates of Pay

One migrant father related how families decide to go to one place instead of another. He said that there were various factors to consider. In one area, he could get work during the winter and summer, but the rents were high. However, the pay is better. He said if there were many working people in the family, it pays to go to a place where there is a lot of work even though the rent is high. His wife said that even though there is not always work for everyone, they go to a particular camp because it has child care facilities as well as low rent.

Some families don't want to move for the whole season. They choose to move for a few months. One family moved for two months to work in the canneries. The wife explains why:

> ***We can get a lot of money there. They pay me $9 an hour, and they pay (my husband) $9.25 an hour. Here in the lettuce the woman gets $5.75 an hour, and the man gets $6.80 an hour. Right now there is some work with the cotton, weeding the plants. But they only pay $4.50 an hour, and they treat you bad.***

For many migrants, economics drive the decision-making process, virtually to the exclusion of everything else.

> ***We go where they pay more and where the work is easier.***

The decision-making process also involves social considerations: housing, availability of schools and other services, and the presence or absence of friends, relatives, and local contacts.

Social Reasons for Moving to a Particular Place

The decision-making process also involves social considerations: housing, availability of schools and other services, and the presence or absence of friends, relatives, and local contacts.

The decision-making process is less complicated, but far riskier for those who aren't well informed. It often takes two to three years of difficult moves with poor financial return before such migrants are able to settle into a migration pattern that works.

> ***Sra. L is not sure if they will go this year or not. Last summer they didn't plan to go. Her brother just said, "vamonos" and they up and went. She***

> *said they looked and looked until they found a rancher to work for, and that it is hard to find work if you don't already have a relationship established with an employer. "Todo la gente tiene su ranchero y es bien dificil encontrar un ranchero. Hay mucha competencia entre los trabajadores." (translation: Everyone has his/her own grower, and it is very difficult to find one of your own. There is a lot of competition among the workers.*

Housing Considerations

Housing can be a critical variable in the choice of where to move.

Housing can be a critical variable in the choice of where to move. An ethnographer asked one migrant family head in Arizona why the family chose one location over another.

> *He responded that his wife was very friendly, and that there was a person in Arizona that was going to the camp in California and she asked him if they could follow him and he said yes. This was earlier before they had a system of numbers (lottery for the houses in the camps) and they arrived and there was a line, "from here to those trees", pointing about one mile away. He said that they waited all day until the night and then a man came up in a jeep and told them that all of the houses were taken. He suggested to them that they go to ________ (town), that there was a camp there that might have places for them. So they drove over there and finally at 11:00 at night they got a place. Now they receive a card in the mail that gives them a number so that they don't have to wait in a line. That was 16 years ago and they are still going back to the same camp.*

The housing problem exists in all three migrant streams. Because state and federal agencies are closing inferior and dangerous housing, many migrants find it increasingly difficult to find any housing at all.

> *Mrs. R said housing was one of the major disadvantages to moving. She said housing is always a problem when they go to Virginia. She said most of the people living in the camp go to Virginia after the crops are finished here. However, there are already people working there: planting and laying plastic. When they are done here and go up to Virginia they can't find housing because everything is already taken.*

Another Hispanic migrant in Florida reported similar problems

> *Mrs. B said she could not have her children in the program (migrant) because she had not traveled*

> *for the last two years. She said she explained to them (migrant day care managers) that the reason why she did not travel was because she had 5 children, and it's hard to find housing. She told me the last time she went to (upstream state) they had everything arranged with the farmer to work for him. They had to borrow $200 to get here and when they did, the crew leader told them and 3 other families with children, that they could not stay because they could not give them a house. They had no money to come back to Florida; so, the crew leader gave them the money they needed. They now live in a camp where they allow them to stay year round. Mrs. B said they don't want to be sent back again or lose the house they have now so they have to stay where they are.*

Sometimes the decision of where to move is based on chance acquaintances, coupled with some reason to change the migration pattern (better pay, and crop failure in the old place and so forth).

> *We used to go near Amarillo to get the potato out and everything, and clean the betabel (beets or sugarbeets) and all that stuff. But now we are planning to go to Mississippi, and we're still planning to go but it depends if my dad gets work here or not. This friend of my mom's, she went with a group to Austin (state-wide PAC meeting) I guess. She left for about a week, and she had a roommate and this roommate told her about working in Mississippi and all that stuff. So she told my dad and my dad said that if he didn't have work in the summer he would go. And I don't think he's gonna work here, so we're still planning on it."*

On the other hand, friendships formed in the camps are one reason that some migrants go back to the same places every year. Some migrants told the ethnographers that they had more friends in the migrant camp than they did in their home town where they had grown up; so, they returned to the same camp year after year.

Because some migrant families develop strong ties with a particular grower, they return to the same farm, or set of farms, year after year. This loyalty can be seen from one migrant mother's comments.

> *We already been working with him since 1976. And he knows that with all the work there he don't have to teach us anything. We just go there and go work. And he don't like to hire people that don't know anything because it's hard for him and he says that he looses a lot of time teaching them how to do the job. And he says that he likes people that already know it.*

So for some migrants, the target location may be an extended family tradition that crosses several generations and involves parents, cousins, aunts and uncles, and relatives by marriage. In the camp where one ethnographer was living, some families were third generation migrants, and their extended families were living in the camp also. They felt there were many advantages of having family members and friends living near you.

Social Services Availability

The availability of social services is another variable in the decision as to what locations are desirable. Those states where migrants are given preferential treatment become especially attractive.

> *(P. said in Indiana they receive a lot of help from an organization she referred to as "the migrant program.".)*
> *P: From there we go to the migrant program, I mean, they come when the people arrive. I get there today and tomorrow they know I'm there and they come and enroll everybody.*
> *Q: They come to the camp?*
> *P: Yes, they take notes, and then, they tell you to go to the office and get groceries, vouchers for gas, vouchers for new tires.*
> *Q: Can you go every week?*
> *P: No, just when we get there or when there is no work.*

Climate

Migrants say that a change of climate is one of the advantages of migration. Migrants from southern Arizona, where the temperature reaches 115F in the summer, described the milder summers in California as an advantage to moving. Other migrants enjoy the change in scenery. One migrant said:

> *We move so that we are not a slave of the field all of the year. We move to rest from being in the same place all of the time.*

Some migrant children who were interviewed recognized the broadening aspects of travel:

> *C: It takes time to meet many people. I like it though. It's nice to meet some people from other cultures. You learn many things. You just don't meet Anglos, you meet Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Cubans. I prefer to meet lots of people. It's good. You learn more things than if you were staying in the same place all the time. I wouldn't wanna stay*

in (Texas border town) all the time, it would be boring.
E: Yes! Me too! I like to get out.
A: No, not me. I want to stay in (Texas border town). It's my home.

Education programs

At least for some migrants, education for their children along with the economic benefits of migration may be crucial in the decision-making process surrounding the move. One ethnographer discovered that many Mexican families migrated north to the border of Mexico and Arizona so they could work and their children could attend school in the United States. They moved north when school started in the fall and began returning deeper into Mexico sometime in the late spring. Most of the children stayed with friends or relatives until school was out in late spring. Learning English is viewed by many Spanish-speaking migrant parents as the key to success.

At least for some migrants, education for their children along with the economic benefits of migration may be crucial in the decision-making process surrounding the move.

Disadvantages and Advantages of Migration

Migrants told the ethnographers of numerous hardships associated with moving from one location to another. They often ran short of money, or had no money to begin with at the start of a move. They were isolated from home and friends. They were ridiculed for being culturally different. Possessions they left behind were at risk of destruction or theft.

The Cost of Migration

The process of moving is very expensive, and many migrants arrive at their destination with little or no money and food. In some migrant camps, the camp directors allow migrants to defer payment for housing until they received their first checks. But this is not always the case.

> *The foremen in the fields told me that they would sometimes loan money to the workers until they were paid. One lady with a family of seven told me that one day the week before they had not had enough food to make the lunches. She had not told anyone in the camp about her problem. Because most of the migrants I interviewed in California had been migrating to the same location for up to 17 years, they often left their belongings in an old car and left the car with a farmer or a friend. One lady described to me how the rats had gotten into the car that they had left last year and had eaten*

> *holes in all of the blankets and sheets. Others described how difficult it was to leave their houses unattended in another location. Some had had their houses robbed while they were gone and to prevent theft almost all had to remove the electrical appliances from their homes before leaving. Others had relatives live in the house or paid someone to watch it while they were gone.*

Social Isolation

Some migrants told how difficult it was to be without family and good friends. The following is translated from Spanish:

> *The disadvantages, I understand, is having to deal with people that you do not know, that you do not have a friendship with them. And to try to endure them and understand each other. It is an advantage when you know people."*

Isolation often fosters fear of strangers and an unwillingness to make contacts. Migrant recruiters help the migrants overcome this isolation.

Isolation often fosters fear of strangers and an unwillingness to make contacts. Migrant recruiters help the migrants overcome this isolation. They are an important link between the camps and the society around them. This is one of the reasons why migrant recruiters are so important to the program, and one of the reasons that good recruiters are so highly respected in migrant camps.

Isolation and constant adjustments demanded by new surroundings and new people is very hard on migrant children.

> *E: When you have to move, you feed bad! Because you leave everybody and you don't see them till. . . .*
> *A: And you know you're gonna miss all your friends!*
> *C: And then you're over there and you don't wanna come back here!*
> *E: Yeah, it's the same thing for wherever you have to leave. It's hard to have to always leave and come back and say goodbye all the time.*
> *D: Like when you're over there, you don't want to come here. Like Michigan, it's a real nice place.*
> *C: It's just the changing part that's hard. Once you get used to it, you adjust, right? And then you like it.*
> *A: Sometimes you get so nervous about it, though, you get like sick. You know, like an upset stomach (everyone laughs). You know, now really sick. Oh, just sometimes.*
> *E. It takes time to adjust. It takes time.*

Learning New Ropes and Rules

Sometimes migrants, especially those unfamiliar with the culture of the United States and the English language, experience difficulty in comprehending and dealing with institutions and people of the stable population. Bureaucratic red tape sometimes affects migrants. A migrant told an ethnographer that while visiting Mexico, their baby had contracted encephalitis and was now severely retarded. The two states in which the family lived had each refused to provide medical insurance for the family.

> *Ethnographer: I asked the lady if this was the first time that they had encountered problems while they had been moving around and she replied, "Yes it is. It was the first time and we got no help."*

There is a need to provide assistance to migrants to help them gain knowledge and access to the services and institutions available to the stable population.

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The Moving Process

The process of moving to find temporary employment is complicated. It takes careful planning and much skill to get things done and to survive the problems encountered along the way.

Preparing for the move

First, as had been shown, most migrants do not move at random. Many have long-term relationships with growers who keep them informed about crop conditions and labor requirements. Other migrants move to locations where they know they can work for several growers. They, too, keep informed about upstream conditions, usually staying in touch with other migrants, or with friends and relatives who have "settled out" in the area where they are interested in working.

The following example from an ethnographer's notes illustrates the complex knowledge and level of communication necessary for successful migration.

> *The rancher owns a vegetable farm, and so depending on the season, the family will be planting, cutting or packing cabbages, broccoli, peppers, or pickles. They expect to start working on the 15th of April, but they can never be sure because of the weather, and this year there were especially heavy snowfalls late in the season. The rancher calls them early in February to let them know when he*

> *expects to start, and then calls again every 2 or 3 weeks with updated projections.*
>
> *They were in the middle of packing when I got there, as they expect to leave this Thursday, April 9, but they still have not gotten final word from their rancher and are anxious to know for sure. "Usually he gives us plenty of time, but you can never really be sure when he's going to call. It's hard to have to wait around when you know you have to go but you aren't sure when."*

Once the move is eminent, the family has many tasks to perform in order to move.

So the first part of the move upstream comes from gathering information about when to move. Once the move is eminent, the family has many tasks to perform in order to move, and they hope that they do not have to do anything that is not routine. The following is one family's pre-moving procedure:

> *Before leaving the five most important things they have to do are: packing clothes, which takes about a full day; getting the truck ready, which involves an oil change, tune up, fixing minor things and maybe even buying new tires; getting the house in order, which means cleaning up, putting things away, and shutting off the utilities; and taking the kids out of school. She [the mother] can take the kids out of school in various ways, and has done them all at one time or another. She can go and talk directly with the teachers and secretary, she can call in, or she can send in a note with her son to give to the teachers. Depending on what else she has to do and whether or not the individual school staff in question would be satisfied with a phone call or note, she would prefer not to have to visit the school.*

Sometimes the decision to move is not made until the last possible minute. Under those circumstances planning is not possible, and the family has to scramble to survive the trip.

> *One lady from G, Mexico said that just one day they think about leaving, "like you would think about going on vacation."*

On the Road

Two of the three ethnographers traveled with migrants as they moved from home-base to an upstream location. This allowed them to directly observe the moving procedure and to interview the families about what was happening.

The ethnographers were not able to observe all the types of moves that migrants make. They observed only moves that involved family groups. In the Eastern stream, there are crew leaders who take bus loads of single males north for the season. There are comparable situations in the other migrant streams but, the descriptions we collected all had common themes of stress, crowding, and long hours of travel.

> *Another lady, when asked about her trip up from Mexico said that last year they had left an old car with her husband's brother filled with their things. They drove up in another car from G. The trip lasted four days, and they slept alongside the road. I asked her how the trip was and she said that all they did was drive, drive, drive. There were five in the car. From 11 or 12 at night until 4 to 5 in the morning they stopped and slept. They brought their own food. She said that now in Mexico there is very little work and many people rob you. They were afraid to sleep along the road, but they didn't have any choice. She said that the food that you would buy along the trip was very bad, and sometimes it made you sick.*

An ethnographer found that migrant families in the Eastern stream travel in at least two slightly different ways: as a single family or as a group of families in a caravan. Single men tend to travel by themselves or tag on to a caravan of families. Caravans are usually headed by a crew leader who is taking his crew to work upstream. The trip north is non-stop. Exceptions are brief stops to eat and use the bathrooms, and longer stops to rest when the driver is too tired to continue. Car trouble is common; therefore, people who drive old cars prefer to travel in a caravan. Help is available if the car breaks down.

The trip north is non-stop. Exceptions are brief stops to eat and use the bathrooms, and longer stops to rest when the driver is too tired to continue.

The following log of a trip was kept by the ethnographer who participated in a caravan from Florida to South Carolina. As can be seen, the stress associated with these trips is very high.

> *F, the crew leader, pays for the gas of her three cars, but she doesn't charge anything to those she is taking with her in the van.*
> *(6/10/87)*
> *1:20 PM: Leave P Florida for South Carolina. The caravan consisted of 5 cars including a white truck, a van, 2 pickups, and a car with single men. The white truck headed the caravan and F in the pickup close to it. I traveled in the pickup with F (with air conditioning!!!). In the back of the pickup we had F's children. Besides them, there was A and her baby son J. E and her baby came in the front with us because of the AC. Four dogs completed the troupe in the back.*
> *10:00 PM: We leave the truck stop. F, after con-*

> *sulting with M, decides to go on hoping the white truck will not break down. I traveled with her in the front of the pickup. The kids were sleeping in the back. F looked tired, and I talked to her to keep her awake. She was worried about the driver in front of her because he seemed to be getting off the road too much. She was afraid he was falling asleep.*
> *12:00 PM: F wants to stop to give people a chance to rest. We pulled out at a rest stop along the highway.*
> *5:45 AM: We leave the rest stop where we spent the night.*
> *8:30 AM: stop for breakfast*
> *8:46 AM: As soon as we left the breakfast place the car with the singles stops off the road. The others had gone ahead. I pull off the road to see what happened. They have lost the muffler. The men get out and try to tie it with something.*
> *9:00 AM: stop off the road. The singles' car lost the muffler again.*
> *9:25 AM: stop again. The white truck is losing oil, they think it is a seal.*
> *11:45 AM: arrive at destination.*

Migrant discussions about the process of moving share a common theme: the cost of the move, and fear of being unable to afford to return home.

In the Midwest stream, migrants travel either in single cars or in caravans of families. Going east, many stop at a migrant facility in Hope, Arkansas. There they can stay at least overnight and sometimes for a few days. Families traveling in any other direction from Texas drive straight through, sometimes staying on the road for 20 to 36 hours non-stop. Most of the vehicles are old. If someone gets sick, unless the situation is desperate, he or she stays sick until the destination is reached. Breakdowns are common, and a budgeted expense of the move is the cost of fixing some major part of a car. Migrant discussions about the process of moving share a common theme: the cost of the move, and fear of being unable to afford to return home. The following illustrates:

> *Mrs. S said the whole trip cost her $400 between preparation of the car and expenses along the road. I said she'd have to save a lot of money to go back home. She said if she didn't have the money, she would have to borrow it from her sisters back in Texas.*

Another common theme is illness, from car sickness episodes to more serious illnesses. One teenager described her trip up from Mexico.

> *My sister threw up. It was so hot."*

Another difficulty is simply the stress of long travel in cramped conditions. One migrant described the moving process as follows:

> *I had a little car then and there were many of us for one little car so it was difficult to find a house for a family of 8 in ________. It was difficult and we had to sleep in the car for several nights seated. But we liked it because we knew that another day we would find work and be able to obtain money in order to eat."*

Not all moves are difficult. Some families have a relatively easy move. One ethnographer described her experience of a move from Arizona to California, as follows:

> *The move that I made with a family from southern Arizona to northern California was one of the easier trips. The family had one car and a pickup with a trailer. I drove my car and brought the 13 year old boy, the tortillas, menudo, and four large rounds of cheese. We began our trip at 4:00 AM, stopping about every 45 minutes to rest or to eat, and arrived at our destination 14 hours later. We stayed in a motel for the night and the family went out to a restaurant to eat that evening. The family arose to go to the camp 7:00 AM after resting comfortably for the evening.*

Upon Arrival

If the move is timed correctly, work is available upon arrival. In such cases, some family members begin working the next day. If the timing is off, if bad weather intervenes, or if the migrants have picked an area with too many workers and too few jobs (and they do not have a special relationship with the growers), start of work may be delayed or work may never materialize at all. In the latter case, the migrants may be stranded, broke, and without hope.

Summary

When migrant families decide to move to find work, they begin a complex lifestyle that affects everyone in the family in drastic ways. The decision to migrate may be economic, but the consequences effect their social relationships, their health, their educational opportunities, and their chances of survival in our society.

While there are many reasons people turn to migrant labor, the reason most commonly given by the informants in this study was economic. Migrant labor can be considered a deterrent to education since it provides access to money at an early age without the need for an education.

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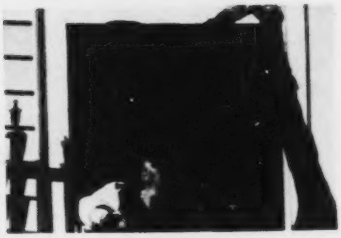

Chapter 5

CONDITIONS FOR MIGRANTS UPSTREAM

Migrant farmworkers experience a number of difficult conditions above and beyond the physical harshness of the stoop labor they perform. The previous chapter described many of the stresses and unhealthy conditions they encounter during their preparations to move, and during the move itself. This chapter provides a view of the types of conditions that migrants are subjected to once they arrive. These conditions range from foul to reasonable, depending on their location, and the state laws governing migrant housing and work conditions. Conditions also depend on the good will and social conscience of the growers for whom the migrants work. Some migrants are fortunate in this regard, others are not.

Conditions also depend on the good will and social conscience of the growers for whom the migrants work.

Housing

Migrant housing conditions vary greatly from area to area, and even within the same locale. Some migrants live in well-kept quarters furnished either by the growers, or by the State and Federal government. On the other hand, some migrant families working close to the border of Mexico have had to live in the orchards where they picked lemons and oranges during the day. They slept on orange crates or under makeshift awnings under the trees. Fortunate migrants are the migrants who have worked in an area for some time, who know the ropes, and know when to arrive in time to find decent housing.

> *While in California, I lived in a Federally funded government camp for migrant workers. The operation of the camp was overseen by the county. The camp had houses for about 75 families and was well run by a competent, friendly, helpful staff. In the camp were child care facilities, which were open from 5:00 AM to 5:30 PM and a school for children 3 and 4 years old. Rents were low, and for a small four bedroom house the migrants paid $120 a month, with utilities furnished. Laundry facilities and playgrounds were available for the families. The camp was a close community, even though most families did not live in the same communities downstream. Most of the families in the camp migrated from Mexico.*

In some locations housing was expensive and difficult to obtain, especially when the crops started to come in.

At other locations living conditions were not as good. Some private camps were quite inferior. In some locations housing was expensive and difficult to obtain, especially when the crops started to come in.

> *In* ____ *(name of town), when there is no lettuce, the prices were lower and you could rent a place cheaper. When there was lettuce, the houses cost a lot to rent. The life made us suffer a lot. At times I sleep uncomfortably."*

A more vivid description of living conditions that were "not so good" comes from a migrant family who migrated north for the first time in a long time:

> *Last year was the first year she went north since she was a child. She went with her children and her brother and his family to (upstream state) to work in sugarbeets, and clearing stones from other fields. They left on May 20 and returned on July 4. Living conditions there were abysmal: the farmer provided a one room house with no furniture, running water or electricity. They had to sleep—when they succeeded in actually falling asleep—on the dirt floor and were often infested with lice and bothered by all sorts of other bugs, rats, etc. For this, the rancher charged them $250 a month rent, and they paid for all utilities separately. She said that she was constantly tired. After having worked all day in the fields, she had to cook and clean and take care of her children, and it seemed as if she was constantly washing clothes to "try and remove the soil from our clothes and our lives. We suffered a lot. It was a real struggle for me." Before they found a rancher to work for and a place to live up there, she said they had to sleep in the park in the cold until they found something.*

Living conditions like the ones described above, are not uncommon. This is one of the reasons that migrants suffer health problems similar to those found in Third World countries. It is also one reason why children miss school. In some cases it is due to illness. In other cases, the children may not have clean clothes to wear and may be ashamed to leave the house.

A Typical Work Day

A typical migrant work day can last twelve to fourteen hours during the peak of the season. Most of those hours are spent stooped over, or carrying heavy loads. The migrants interviewed consistently described their work as very hard. A migrant father spoke of work in the fields with irony and sincerity (translated from Spanish).

> *This is the life of the country. It is very agreeable for the air that you breathe in the country, because you have to get up at 5:00 AM, and the dirt smells wet, very beautiful. But when it is windy, when there is dust, when there is rain, the work has to continue, even though you are very wet. And they say (the bosses) they can't work when they are wet and "Let's go, boys, to the house", but here there are people that have to remain and work, even though they are soaking wet. Everything is wet, your clothes, your papers, your billfold. This is the life of the worker. But there is nothing else if you don't study.*

Each of the ethnographers collected information on a typical work day for the people they lived with, both in their home-base and upstream. The following account, from an ethnographer's notes is typical of all three streams, varying only in terms of the foods the women prepare and, perhaps, the length of the working day.

> *A typical work day in the summer begins for the women around 3:45 AM when they get up to make the lunches for the family. The lunches are substantial, not a measly sandwich. The women cook the meat, make tortillas and cook the beans and make burritos for the family to take to work and school.*
>
> *If there are small children in the house, they are taken to the child care facility which opened at 5:00 AM. either to spend the day or if they were older, to wait for the bus to pick them up to take them to school. The families left at 5:30 AM to drive to the fields for the day.*
>
> *Work begins at 6:00 AM. and the work day is 10 hours long. Some members of most families work all day Saturday, and I observed some who worked one-half day on Sunday. The foremen in the fields give two breaks of 15 minutes each, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. There is a 30 minute lunch break.*
>
> *While hoeing and picking, workers talk back and forth to each other "telling adventures". Some of the women have radios strapped to their backs and they play music and listen to soap operas. When the soap operas come on, most of the workers, men and women, work within earshot of the radio. Workers work rapidly in the morning, but close to quitting time, do not do much except move their hoes around in one place. A horn sounds at 4:30 and everyone leaves for the day.*

> *Once back at the camp, the women go to pick up the children in the child care facility and return to their houses to start dinner. Family members take turns showering and helping in the kitchen. Later the women will go to do the laundry. One of the informants said, "When we get back after working everyone has something to do. I come to the kitchen to start dinner, and my husband will go in the shower. My daughter will be back with the baby. After one person has showered, the next person will, and that person will come in and help with the cooking. We all share the tasks."*

The work day described above is typical, the support services are not. At many locations, workers go to the fields at 5 AM, but there are no child care facilities. In such cases, older children (eight and nine year olds) watch the little children until the school bus comes, or, if there are no day care facilities for the two to five year olds, older children watch the youngsters all day. In some cases, small ones are taken to the fields.

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The quote above is also not typical in terms of the male/female roles. In the family described above, the husband helped with household tasks, but his behavior was far from the norm. Most migrant men did not help with cooking and clothes in the morning or at night. As a result, most migrant women must work an additional four to six hours after a ten hour day in the fields.

General Work Conditions

Work conditions are, in large part, determined by the farmer, by the contractor who works directly for the farmer, or by the foreman who insures that the workers do their job. In some cases, migrants encounter serious problems due to poor field sanitation or to pesticide exposure from entering the fields too soon after spraying. In other cases, while the work is hard, the conditions are reasonable. From the field notes:

> *If work is plentiful, workers have a choice with whom they worked. A good boss is one that provides ice for the water on a hot day, doesn't order the workers around and is fair with the workers. One migrant is hiding from a contratista (contractor) in a camp one day and explained, "I don't want to work for him. He is a nice person, but sometimes we only work for three hours. He comes in the morning and chooses the people that are going to work that day. It is better if we all work until there is no more work, and then we all quit."*

Isolation

The isolation of the migrants from the rest of the community where they are living is hard to imagine until it has been experienced. Migrants upstream are almost invisible. Camps are located in rural areas near the fields in low income urban areas. To live in the camp one has to work for the farmer or company who owns it; therefore, all the people in camps are migrants. It's possible to drive through farm land where literally hundreds or thousands of migrants are living and working, and yet to be unaware of their existence.

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Migrants are socially invisible, as well. Ethnic groups are often kept separate in camps. They rarely interact with each other, thus re-enforcing the isolation. Local people try to keep the migrants at a distance. In addition to being strangers, migrant children are often culturally different; local children ignore or pick on them. This reinforces their isolation.

> ***Sister M said she grew up in a rural community and knew first hand how closed to outsiders they were. She said rural communities accepted migrants as a necessary thing, but the attitude was: "You came to pick the crop, when you're done, you may get on."***

Migrants recognize their isolation, and understand they are viewed as outsiders. They often speak of trying to get local people to recognize that migrants aren't different from the local people.

> ***F: Ours is another world. One time they did a newspaper article on us.***
> ***Q: Who did it?***
> ***F: A local newspaper in South Carolina. He asked me what we did for recreation and those things. I said, "Well, we are normal people like you. We go to the movies, we go to K Mart, you know. We are normal. Just because we are migrants, it doesn't mean we are from another world! He laughed."***

Sometimes the isolation is not only cultural, but also geographical. In areas where the population density is very low to begin with, and where the farms are widely scattered and need only a small labor force, a migrant family can easily be the only family of their social and cultural group around.

> ***This family goes to Minnesota every May and returns each year in November. Their ranchero of 14 years just called them and told them that the planting would be a little late this year and they could wait a few weeks if they wanted. On the***

> *ranch in "X", Minnesota they work sugarbeets and then move to "Y" Minnesota early in the fall to can corn. In neither place do they know of a migrant school program. Both towns are extremely small and sparsely populated and very few migrant families work near them. The nearest town and program that they know of is, they say, 70 miles away; much too far to be of use to their children. No one from the school has ever contacted them in either place, nor has the rancher or anyone at the canning company ever referred them to any school program. They said this year they would ask about one.*

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Twenty-five to thirty miles is the practical limit for migrants to explore or use the services in their area. Beyond that distance, the travel time and expense of getting there and back, coupled with long work days and short nights keeps them isolated. Only a dire emergency—usually medical in nature—causes them to travel further. The practical distance to reach educational opportunities, whether regular school or summer programs, is often less than 25 to 30 miles.

Uncertainty: A Major Stressor

A consistent element of migrant work is its uncertainty. There are dozens of variables, out of the migrants' control that affect start and stop dates, and daily availability of work. Weather can delay or rush the start of the picking season. Field conditions can change on a daily basis; so some days there is work, and other days there is none.

Waiting for one's "ranchero" to call and say the crops are ready can be trying for the whole family, and especially for the children in school. If he calls early, the family leaves before the children finish school. If he calls late, the family may not have sufficient money to make the trip, without going into debt, or the family misses the opportunity altogether. This uncertainty colors the lives of migrants and their children, and produces a constant background theme that molds their view of the future.

> *M says it is difficult to plan for the future when one is a migrant (she migrates during the summer):*
> *M: Here you have it good, but in North Carolina you may not have it so good. There are years that when you start working you have more money than when you're finished and ready to go back home. The work of a migrant has no security*

Sometimes the jobs can disappear altogether. Crop prices fluctuate. If the price of the crop drops too low, the farmer may cut short the harvest and plow it under, putting migrants out of work at the worst possible time.

Migrants are also victims of broad economic trends in the United States. For example, the current farm crisis affects not only the family farmer whose livelihood is jeopardized, but also the migrants who work at the farm. When a farm is auctioned in the Midwest, one or more migrant families in Texas or Florida are suddenly without a predictable job for that season. These unfortunate migrants must then spend from one to three very lean and uncertain years re-establishing new ties and predictable part-time employment for their family.

Migrants are also victims of broad economic trends in the United States.

Not All Negative: There Are Some Advantages

Not all aspects of migrant farm labor are negative. Some migrant workers believe that the negatives are balanced by the amount of freedom that characterizes at least some aspects of migrant and seasonal farm labor.

> *Mrs. S: Look, working in the fields you can go the days you want to go and if you don't want to go you don't. If you take a stable job you have to go everyday at the same time. There are times when a child is sick, other times when they call me from school to go and get one of my children because he is sick, and if I wasn't there . . .*
>
> *Q: So, you are saying that for a mother with many children it is better to work in the fields because you can take the day off when you want to?*
> *Mrs. S: Yes . . . In a stable job you have to go everyday; and if you don't, they find someone else.*

Unfortunately, this freedom, is for the young and healthy and for those who have a choice.

> *Q: So you are saying you don't want to take another job?*
> *Mr. S: I'm thinking about it. I'm probably getting tired of this and all. But, we are pretty young still. We, you know, think we can make pretty good money. At least this week, your money was quicker, you could have made what you want. You didn't have to go to the boss man to raise the piece. You can raise the piece when you want, go to work when you want and knock off when you want. It's up to you how much your body can stand. Like a couple of years ago if you got a job paying you $125 a week, you'd be making good money. OK, when we are in the season, may be if we are running good one day we can make that much in one day.*

If the work is good and the jobs plentiful, migrants and migrant children see more advantages to migration than just flexibility of hours. One advantage for teenagers is that—as migrants—they can work and earn money to buy clothes and other things they want for school. In many of their home-base states, on the other hand, there are virtually no summer jobs for teenagers.

> *Ethnographer: What are some of the advantages of moving like that?*
> *V: Well, you don't get to stay down there. Sometimes it's boring down there.*
> *Q: Where is down there?*
> *G: In Texas. And when you come here during the week you work, then it's not that long. It's shorter and on weekends you get to go out. You wouldn't have money to go out if you weren't working.*
> *Q: This is the summer time you are talking about?*
> *G: Yes. And then it's fun. You go to work and you get your money. Down there you wouldn't have a job.*
> *Q: Is it hard for teenagers to find jobs there, in TX? Like here you see a lot of teenagers working in supermarkets, could you do that there?*
> *G: Well, like the stores are really far away from where you live. Over there you always need a car. It'd be hard for us because we'd need to learn how to drive, or we'd need a car or a ride. Sometimes it wouldn't be possible to pick you up every single day.*
> *Q: So, why do you think so many people are coming up to Florida and going all the way to Michigan from TX?*
> *V: Some is because to get a job you have to be bilingual or speak English or something. Sometimes they can't speak English and they can't get a job, so they just come to Florida to work.*
> *G: Some of them come'cause they could get their sons and daughters to work and get more money than if they stayed down there. When they come to work here they get to send money for the payments and like that they all work together and make more money, they pay faster.*
> *Q: If they were in TX they couldn't work all together?*
> *G: They all have to get different job, and like I told you if they didn't have cars they wouldn't be able to work. Everything over there is far, it's not like here. You need a car.*
> *V: And like to get a part time job sometimes you have to be 16 or 15. If you are 14 and strong you can go to work in the field.*

In addition to the economic advantages of migrating, many migrant parents and children who speak a language other than English see learning English as another advantage. Parents hope that improving their children's English skills will help those children enter the mainstream job market in the United States.

> *All three mothers said their kids were able to learn much more English up North and that they were pleased with this. One woman's kids did not want to return to L because she liked the summer school so much, she wanted to "stay and learn more English."*

Child Labor

Children are essential to the micro-economy of the migrant household. Migrant children are usually prohibited from working in industries like dairy, poultry, fishing, or food processing, but in the fields, child labor is common. Most migrants are paid on a piece work basis for harvesting crops. If there is little good-paying work, everyone is being paid a minimum hourly wage. Either way, children can make a significant contribution to the household income, a contribution that can make the difference between survival or failure. Therefore, as soon as they are old enough to work (occasionally eight, nine or ten, but more frequently at twelve) some of the children are in the fields helping their parents.

Migrant recruiters and supervisors often run into a conflict between the need for children to work, and the need of the children to be in school. The following interview was observed and recorded in ________ (State).

Migrant recruiters and supervisors often run into a conflict between the need for children to work, and the need of the children to be in school.

> *Director of Summer school: Let's talk about who is going to come to school.*
> *Mom: A, J is working.*
> *Director: J is working too? Do you think he'll work all summer?*
> *Mom: Well, this morning he was tired, and my husband told him if he wants to go to summer school, and he said, "no, no, no!!!! I don't want to go."*
> *Ethnographer: How old is J?*
> *Mom: He is ten.*

Migrants' need to maximize their income conflicts with their desire to help their children get out of the migrant lifestyle. The following is a quote from a man who arrived upstream with no money and had taken his high-school age boys to the fields with him to work. The man was angry when the foreman would not hire his boys.

> *Migrant: I think that when the parents are having difficult times economically, I think that it is a great help that the children help during the time of vacation. But I think that it would be better, in those cases, to take a lot of care. At times, there are people that don't value the education of their children, and they take them out of school to put them to work. Some of the parents become ambitious and want to earn a set amount of money, and they let the children sacrifice their education. I believe it is preferable to educate them than to put them to work. But in certain occasions it is important that the kids help their parents. Because generally people like us who are in this situation have a very low income.*

The role of the "majordomo" often determines whether children work or do not work in the fields.

The role of the "majordomo" often determines whether children work or do not work in the fields. Regardless of the laws or the wishes of the grower or the educational system, the foreman generally hires the workers. Consequently, they can be the deciding factor over whether the children are in schools studying or working in the fields.

In one state, young people are required to present a card stating school is over before they can work in the fields. Generally this is adhered to, but some foremen make exceptions to alleviate economic hardship in a family. Other foremen are very strict, and will not hire young people until school is out. A foreman expressed concern to one of the ethnographers because a father wanted him to hire his high school sons. The foremen told the family they shouldn't have moved until the boys had finished school that semester. Because the foreman would not hire the boys, the family enrolled them in the local school.

Even when the children don't work in the fields, they can make a major economic contribution to the family. By working in the home, by helping with duties that would normally fall to the mother, children free the mother to work in the fields.

> *F: The sister of this young man, she used to take care of all her brothers and sisters. There were a lot of them. She cooked, she made tortillas, because my mother worked. Everyday when we came back from school, my sister would fix dinner for all the children. When my mother got home, everything was done.*
> *E: When you wanted to stay after school, you knew, you couldn't because you had to go home to take care of the children, start supper and clean*

> *the house. When I was 11, I was already making tortillas, my sister cooked and we washed clothes.*

As noted above, one major micro-economic function of older children is to take care of the younger children. This role as surrogate mother often impacts negatively on the older children's education, especially once they are teenagers. This interview illustrates:

. . . one major micro-economic function of older children is to take care of the younger children.

> *I says that "the oldest girl helped me a lot with the other children and with the housework, so she missed a lot of school. I had to take her out of school to watch the children if I had to go to the doctor or to the store. But she knows a lot of English now, from living up North. When she writes, she can't write in Spanish, so she writes me letters in English, and I have to have V tell me what she says. She left school in the 5th grade when she was 13 or 14. Nobody ever said anything to me then that she could not leave school. Now they check a lot if one of them misses school.*

Summary

Migrant families encounter severe conditions when they settle into agricultural labor in upstream locations. The quality of housing, the length of the work day, the hard work, the isolation, and the uncertainty all contribute to an environment that is not conducive to education.

Sometimes there is direct interference with educational progress because of the economic necessity of child labor for family survival. Sometimes, children as young as ten work daily in the fields to supplement the family income. Often older children miss school to care for younger children and thus free both parents to work in the fields. In either case, the ethnography shows clearly that these conditions directly interfere with children's education. New programs are necessary to ameliorate these barriers to the education and advancement of migrant children.

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Chapter 6

ROLE RELATIONSHIPS OF MIGRANTS

The ethnography revealed the roles and norms for social behavior of migrant men, women and children. These roles and norms for social conduct became evident as the ethnographers observed and recorded social interactions of migrant men, women and children with one another and with social institutions they encountered. These interactions are categorized as "ideals" of proper behavior, called roles.

Performance of all functions associated with a role is considered to be appropriate behavior. Failure to behave as expected can cause confusion, distrust and ostracism. The ethnographers interviewed migrants to determine what they consider to be proper and improper performance of the roles of husband, wife, parent and child. An understanding of the roles and rules of migrant behavior is important for migrant education policy makers and administrators.

Male/Female Roles

Human societies assign work and behavioral roles according to two major characteristics, gender and age. Gender and age determine behavior at home and in the work place. The effect these variables have on social behavior varies from culture to culture. In some cultures, there are very clear distinctions between "women's work" and "men's work." In other cultures, the distinction is not as clearly defined.

Gender roles among migrants differ according to the cultural background of the family. In most cases, women are expected to work in the fields and do the household chores. Occasionally men help with household chores as do the children. However, men and boys are usually exempt from household responsibilities.

The following statement is typical of many made by migrant females:

> *The women have a harder time. When they get home from work, they have to cook the dinner and wash and iron the clothes. Sometimes the men cooperate, but sometimes they don't.*

The "ideal" role behavior changes due to time, place, and circumstance. The changes in gender roles in the United States as a whole are very visible over the past

20 years. The ethnographers observed a difference in female role behavior between Mexican and U.S. Hispanic female migrants. Prior to accompanying their husbands to the U.S., many Mexican women had never done agricultural work. However, Hispanic women whose parents had worked as migrant farm laborers in the U.S. had agricultural work experience often from a very young age. One of the ethnographers recorded the following interview.

> *Mrs. C: We got married, and we came over here. My father had already been to this side.*
> *Q: Your father also worked in the fields?*
> *Mrs. C: Yes. When my husband and I came, we worked in anything we could find . . . tomato. . . .*
> *Q: Had you ever worked in the fields before?*
> *Mrs. C: No, never. My father hired men to help him.*

This is contrasted with the multiple generation migrant families in the U.S., as summarized in the following interview in a Northern state.

> *Mrs. B comes from a migrant family. Her father was a crew leader and all of her brothers are crew leaders now. When she came with her father as a child, the main crop here was sugarbeets. Now she and her family work in the cabbage.*

For most migrants, especially female migrants, marriage signals the end of educational opportunities.

Marriage at a young age is common for migrants and even more prevalent for female migrants. For most migrants, especially female migrants, marriage signals the end of educational opportunities. A few young men stay in school; women commonly do not. Marriage at the age of 15 or 16 effectively bars young women from education and traps them in poverty. School programs and migrant education programs need to find effective solutions to this problem. The interview below addresses this issue:

> *Q: If we accept the fact that there is sexism in every culture, how does it affect education?*
> *M: Well, one thing that I've seen is that once people get married that's the end of education. Women have more restrictions to pursue an education. However, I think both men and women have equal access to education. There are differences between cultures. The Mexican Americans drop out to get married, whereas Anglos and Blacks may not get married, but they get pregnant. It is helpful to regard education as a continuum with different needs along the way. Day care is a need. If you extend parental education, you enable them to become role models for their children and that is cost-effective in education. Parents need a different kind of education.*

However, it is not only women who suffer. With marriage comes the assumption of adult roles for both sexes. In most migrant families there is strong pressure for the males to support the family, and for females to have children, keep house, and provide additional economic support. These complementary roles assist young migrant couples to survive but severely limit the chance for educational success and advancement. The following interview with migrant teenage girls summarizes their expectations and the realities the future holds for many of them.

> *Q: How do you see yourselves and your families, your own families? Do you see yourselves as having a life similar to your parents?*
> *V: No, hopefully not.*
> *Q: What is so bad about the life your parents have? They are feeding you, and they have a house. . . .*
> *V: I guess you just want a better life for your kids, they don't have to work in the fields because it's hard. You want them to finish school, get a good job.*
> *Q: Why wouldn't you want to have the kind of life your parents have?*
> *G: It's so hard. . . .*
> *Q: But you make money. . . .*
> *G: But I mean . . . in case you get married and have your own children, you don't want them to pass through what you had to pass through cause it was hard work for you and you don't want . . . you tell them how much you worked and how hard you did it. . . .*
> *Q: Do your parents tell you: 'I don't want you to have to do what I did?'*
> *G: Yes . . . they say: 'we want you all to get a good education so you can get a husband that don't work in the fields, and you can get a better job than we are doing.'*
> *Q: So the key is also to get a husband who does not work in the fields, because if he works in the fields, what happens to you?*
> *V: You work in the fields.*

Adult/Child Roles

All cultures differentiate between adult roles and the behavior that is expected of children. At differing ages, children begin to change their behavior and adopt adult roles. Adults begin to accept those changes and to reward them by modifying their behavior toward the children. In the United States, we legally recognize those changes at about age 18, and other changes at age 21. In many cultures, males and females

Differences between the role expectations of the dominant society and migrant families have very serious consequences for educational programs.

achieve adult status at a much younger age. In many migrant families, boys begin to be treated as adults when, at age 15 or 16 they can earn as much in the fields as their father. Girls start being treated as adults when they are capable of having children and when they can manage a household. Differences between the role expectations of the dominant society and migrant families have very serious consequences for educational programs. The following is an example of some of the roles children assume at a fairly early age, which can have consequences for their education.

> *I have a little 7th grader, (Vietnamese name), and she is an Amero-Asian. And she is a little manipulator [laughs] but she knows the system and she knows how to work it to her advantage. She is the eldest in her family, she just has another little sister. Her mother has since remarried and that's where the little sister is from. The mother is attending adult English classes and the father works at [packing plant]. She's Asian and her dad was an American in Viet Nam. She's been in the U.S. maybe 18 months, 2 years. Not incredibly long. She bears a lot of responsibility there in the home. She is the contact in terms of translator. They have only one car so she does a lot of the grocery shopping by walking to the store, it's about a half mile walk for her. But she bears a lot of the responsibility in terms of the babysitting while the mother's in class and things like that. The mother is very friendly. She speaks very little English, and when we make home visits, again, she voices concerns about whether or not she is in school, and is she behaving, and things like that. Now she has to do a lot of the translating for her, so there have been times when (student) has come to class and asked us, you know 'How do I say that our phone bill is not correct or that I want to disconnect this?' She's had to grow up quite quickly, but she is a very social person. And it's kind of fun to go through those teenage times with them. She's discovered boys, and her English has suddenly become a lot better in terms of survival here, everything she needs to say to them. It's a positive environment for her at home. There is a caring family there.*

When migrant children have developed beyond combined adult/child roles, they progress to older child status and eventually begin to work in the fields. One ethnographer's notes illustrate this:

> *I asked her why she sent the boys to school if she could take them to the fields with them. Mrs. M. said she sent them because she did not want to*

> *leave them alone in the house. The boys are very active and she is afraid of what they might do if they were alone all day long. She added that they are too young to work now, but when they are old enough they will not be going to summer school anymore.*

Next, it is a short step from summer work to full time migrant employment

> *I asked Mrs. M if her daughter liked to work in the fields. Mrs. M. says C never complains about working. She is very understanding and knows she needs to help her parents in the summertime. Her mother says she likes to work because it gives her a little money to buy clothes. Her mother keeps her check and gives her some money back. This year because of all their debts, Mrs. M. has not been able to give C too much, but she doesn't mind it. Mrs. M. said C told her to keep all the money until they are done paying their debts.*

One of the attractions of migrant labor for teenagers is the money they earn and often get to keep for themselves. The amount they keep or give to the family varies from household to household. Young migrant women often give most of their earnings to the family. Young men keep more money for themselves to help pay for their cars and other needs. Young people who worked in the summers usually paid for some or all of their clothes with their earnings. If they work hard in the fields and are successful, there is a major pull out of school and into a permanent migrant lifestyle.

In addition to the attraction for the children being considered adults, migrants talk about families who use their children to better themselves financially. The statement that Mexican migrants "live like kings in Mexico", was heard several times. It seems that in addition to the resources gained by working in the United States, some migrant families have sacrificed their children's education for their own economic gains.

MIGRANT RELATIONSHIPS WITH INSTITUTIONS

One of the important things we are taught as members of our culture is how to deal with the social institutions, (educational institutions, health care systems, and social service agencies), that we have created as a part of our complex society. In many cases, survival depends on how well we can "work the system." Migrants, especially those who come from a different linguistic and cultural background from the people who run those agencies, can be at a serious disadvantage.

The following sections describe the ethnographic data collected that helped the authors understand how migrants view "the system," and how they attempt, or fail to cope with it.

Dependence vs Independence

The analysis of the ethnographic data revealed that migrants strive to be independent of the "system." This goal to be independent defies a number of stereotypes of migrants. An ethnographer noted this independence:

> ***The migrant families that I observed very seldom depended on outside agencies for help. They took pride in the fact that they could work and immediately sought work when arriving in a new location. Occasionally, especially when they first arrived and did not have money, some would go for food stamps. Two women who were sick went to receive unemployment benefits. But, many expressed their desire to work and not cause the government any problems. Some told me that there were people who needed help more than they did.***

Yet this independence had its limits. Everyone needs help of one type or another at some time. For migrants, this occasional need for help is complicated by their being strangers to the community.

Although migrant parents express much support for education for their children, there is also a feeling that the cycle of migration may be very hard to break and that their children may end up following in their foot steps, regardless of anything they say or do.

When they needed help and were fortunate enough to have obtained government housing, many migrants depended on the personnel in the camp office to make phone calls and take them places in emergencies. If migrant parents were familiar with migrant staff in the school, they would call or depend upon them if there were problems with their children. Many migrants, when experiencing problems with their children, did not seek outside help. Often they did not know who could help them with their problems. Some reported that they needed more counselors in the schools so that their children could have someone to talk to.

Powerlessness: Being Stuck in the Migrant Cycle

Although migrant parents express much support for education for their children, there is also a feeling that the cycle of migration may be very hard to break and that their children may end up following in their footsteps, regardless of anything they say or do. One migrant mother put it this way.

> *I want P to work hard in school and finish so he doesn't have to work in the fields. Like my husband and me didn't finish school and so we have to work in the fields but he can get out. It's too hard to be working in the fields. If you learn in school, it's better. He says he doesn't like it, but he doesn't like to work in the fields either. Last year he worked a little bit after school. But it's too much work. If it's wet or not, you still have to work. It it's wet and muddy, it's hard; and he didn't like the work any better than school. Two of my daughters finished high school. One went to college and got her diploma in, como se llama? secretarial science. But she still goes north with us 'cause she likes working in the fields. She doesn't have a job yet as a secretary. L doesn't go north with us because her husband has a job down here. But all of my other children do. We're gonna have about 9 or 10 trucks going with us this year. Every family has it's own truck. Oh, but the other 3 daughters, they didn't finish high school. They all stopped in the 11th grade. They all got married in the 11th grade. [R, one of the ones who didn't finish was present and looked embarrassed.] My husband and me we just went to the 4th grade because we had to help our parents work. I don't think families have to do that now.*
> *(P disagreed): Yes they do mama, because a lot of kids do quit to go to work, they do!*

The migrant's realistic view of the system, and their understanding they may be trapped, is viewed as apathy by the elementary school teacher who has migrant students in class.

> *They are a little apathetic towards education. I think they think their children are going to do what they do so there is no point*

A feeling of powerlessness is also evident in some of the migrants' interviews about the Migrant Education Program. Even though the Parent Advisory Groups (PACs) are mandated to provide a forum for the program and to provide input from the migrants about the program, many parents feel that they would not be listened to if they spoke out. Furthermore, they are perplexed by the Program's adherence to rules and regulations at the expense of providing necessary services.

> *T: I wish we had a day care for 'em, but we don't. We could try to purpose it I guess, but I don't know if it would accomplish anything. But that would be . . . I mean like I say a lot of the parents are working parents and keep their kids home,*

> *you know, once in a while to babysit or something or other, so they don't have to miss work.*
>
> *An example is a couple years ago we had a Vietnamese family. Both parents were working out at [packing plant], and we had, oh, there were 4 kids and we had 3 of 'em in summer school. And there was a little one we didn't know about, just 2 years old. Just happened that one day that the bus driver picked the kids up and seen this little kid standing at the window, waving goodbye and just crying her little heart out. And when the kids got to school the little boy was telling us, you know, how his sister was carrying on and I said, 'Well what's wrong with her?' And he said, 'Well she cried cause she wanted to come to school with us.' And I said, 'Well how old is she? If she's old enough, bring her!' And he said, 'She's 2.' And I said, 'Well she's too young yet, so she'll have to stay home with your mom and help your mom around the house.' And he said, 'But my mom's not home. She works.' And his dad worked too. 'Well, who does she stay home with,' I asked. 'The dog,' he said. 'You have a little sister that stays home all by herself?' And he said, 'Yup.' They were leaving food and water in the dog dish for her and the dog. I am very serious! This was when we had the full, all day program at school, from 7:30, 8:00 AM 'til 4 in the afternoon and that little girl was at home all alone! So, as soon as we heard this, we had to do something. So we went and picked her up and brought her back. See, we're not supposed to bring little kids into summer school unless they're 4 years old, but we did it. Cause that was the only way these kids could come to school, and they needed summer school so bad! And I mean if you had known that would you have let that little girl stay at home? We just couldn't do it. So we brought her in and put her into the preschool for 4 year olds. She was so happy and so content! And the kids were just so glad.*

. . . it was often the migrant mothers who were the firmest supporters of education.

But not everyone expressed hopelessness. One of the things that the ethnographers discovered was that it was often the migrant mothers who were the firmest supporters of education. They wanted something better for their children; especially the mothers that got little help for the extra hours that women were expected to put in during the harvesting season. Sometimes their hope and support was rewarded. The following interview expresses that hope, however tenuous:

> *Mom: Ah, I would like it if my children did not have to work in the fields like we are. Because,*

> *look now, we are tying tomatoes, I think it's the hardest, look at the blisters I have. I tell my husband, 'I wouldn't like my children to go like this, sweating'. And he says, 'they don't have a crown, they have to do what we do.' But I don't believe that. . . .*

Attitudes towards Authority

Migrants have generally positive attitudes towards authority, especially towards the schools. However, this attitude is occasionally expressed in a way that is culturally confusing to school personnel. Since the parents trust the schools to know what is right for their children, many migrants do not see a need to participate in their child's education in the same way that an Anglo parent would. For example, some migrants consider having conferences with the teacher and asking a teacher about the educational program an inappropriate challenge to the teacher's authority and prestige. Some of the teachers recognize this and try to overcome it.

(an ethnographer talking to a recruiter).

> *In the sense that at the parent teacher conference, somehow the school is perceived as an institution. Now there might be that the teacher is held in very high regard in Viet Nam, and the fact that they will not come to school to challenge anything, even though a kid may be placed because of age in the wrong level. The parent recognizes this, but they're not going to say anything because they fear the system. It's just not tradition for them to go up to a teacher and challenge them. And that is specifically with education. As I see it, I think there's just a real sense of being uncomfortable, of being too visible, and it's not within their culture to do that.*

Many parents, when asked by the ethnographers, expressed their confusion at being asked their opinion. Their opinion was that the schools know best. Otherwise, what was the use of all the education that the school personnel had?

Their opinion was that the schools know best. Otherwise, what was the use of all the education that the school personnel had?

The counter charge that migrant parents do not get involved with the school or the education of their children was often recorded, and almost always lacked the knowledge of the above attitude.

(an ethnographer interviewing teacher)

> *Teacher: I wish there was more parental involvement.*
> *Ethnographer: I asked the teacher why she thought migrant parents were not more involved with the education of their children.*

> *Teacher: One big problem was not being able to get in touch with them. They are working in the fields, and they don't have phones at home. I send notes to parents, but get no response. 'We are not getting to them. We need more contact with adults. When parents do come to school, they are very respectful; they are concerned. Some parents are fearful of teachers. They are almost mute for a while until you put them at ease."*
> *Ethnographer: Why do you think parents feel that way about teachers?*
> *She speculated: We are a different color, we speak English, we've gone to school. They may think we'll look down on them"*

The migrants gave several different reasons for lack of parental involvement; reasons that kept them from approaching the schools.

(Hispanic migrant family)

> *Mrs. C says the teachers send her notes in English about the progress of her children, but she does not speak English. She says she doesn't go to school when they call her because there's nobody there to translate and many times she doesn't have anybody to take her*

Another migrant mother explained that the reason the parents didn't go to the meetings was that most of the meetings were in English, and they didn't understand.

Another migrant mother explained that the reason the parents didn't go to the meetings was that most of the meetings were in English, and they didn't understand. This was verified at a meeting held by the school board in one of the districts. One of the purposes of the meeting was for the school board to receive input on their proposed migrant program.

> *The room was filled with migrant parents and the chairman of the board began speaking in English. After 10 minutes, when someone stopped her and told her that they wanted to translate for the parents, she was very surprised and announced that she didn't realize they were going to translate.*

However, language problems are not the only reasons migrants avoid meetings, as is shown by the following interview.

> *Q: Not too many parents go to the meetings (i.e. PACs). Yesterday was the last meeting and there were only 10 or 12 people. I was wondering why parents . . . I don't know . . . when their children have trouble in school many parents are reluctant to go.*
> *Father: Not too many people go. The majority don't want any problems; they don't like getting up in front of other people. I don't know, I can't understand it. In (border town in Texas) we had*

> *the same problem. Since my wife worked in the school (i.e. migrant) we went, but not too many people came, and almost nobody wanted to talk.*
> *Q: Why didn't they want to talk? Was the meeting in English or Spanish?*
> *Father: Spanish*
> *Q: So why didn't they want to talk?*
> *Father: I guess people are embarrassed.*

A mother expressed her feelings about speaking out in meetings:

> *Sometimes we don't get what we want because we don't know how to talk. I am shy.*

An ethnographer noted that another reason given for not attending meetings was lack of transportation. It was explained that one parent needed to stay with the children, and sometimes the other parent could not drive, so no one attended. One lady stated that she didn't drive, and she had to depend on her husband to take her. If he didn't want to go, they didn't go

Sometimes it is the content of the meetings that causes a lack of interest on the part of the migrants.

> *Migrant mother: At times they are not good meetings. Sometimes they talk about interesting things. Usually they talk about things about the school. They don't talk about the problems of the migrants. When they talk about the children and their problems, that is interesting to me.*

An ethnographer captured the essence of why some parents do not attend meetings

(notes on a conversation with a migrant mother)

> *She used to go to the PACs here in (Texas border town), but says that it's very hard for her to get the time early on Saturdays when her kids are home and that since she has been doing this for so long and her kids have been in the program for so long, that it's really very routine and boring, and that there is no new information to be had. Yes, the program changes, but so far it has not. According to her, there has not been anything very dramatic that she hasn't found out about anyway.*

Sometimes migrants avoid PAC and other meetings because of the nature of their lifestyles. The following quote summarizes the difference between the school's need to be accurate and to not pass on incorrect information, and the migrants' need to know an answer before they have to move on.

> *J: These migrant programs aren't based on real facts, you know? You get a letter or a newsletter or*

> *whatever about a meeting, and they don't get nothing across. Everyone talks at once, nothing gets done, no one is organized. You go and you say 'Answer this for me, why is . . .' and they say 'Uh, mmm, uh, well I can't answer this question for you now, but I'll have an answer for you at our next meeting next month.' Hijole! Next month I may not be here! I mean, I went to one of these meetings once. It's a big shouting match. Someone would ask a direct question and the whole floor would go dead silent. Everybody would be waiting to hear what the answer was gonna be. And then he say 'Well, you know, we don't really have that information, but if you come to our next meeting.' Well forget it! I mean it gets to be that time of year when you're thinking of going [up north] and so a lot of these questions come right into your mind then and there, and you need answers. You want answers then not in a month when may be you're leaving next week. That's just common sense.*

While many migrants stay away from meetings, the ethnographers also found a very dedicated core of parents almost everywhere they went. This core was vitally involved in the migrant education program. These parents make special efforts to participate in school activities and to overcome their fears.

> *Q: Did you go to the pre-K meetings?*
> *Mom: No, because I don't have any children in pre-K anymore. Before I always went. There are times when you come back from the fields very tired, and you take a shower, eat and go. My husband says, 'it is necessary that you go, even if you are tired.' I like to go to know what is going . . . what can I tell you . . . to show that you appreciate what they do. Like the migrant school . . . you are grateful that they take care of your children.*

MIGRANT ATTITUDES TOWARDS EDUCATION

For the first time, at least on a national basis, the ethnographers gathered information on migrant attitudes toward education and the schools they encounter. There is a high premium given to education in some migrant groups. The following is a teacher's comment about the Vietnamese migrant students in her class in Kansas.

> *I think a lot of my kids that I have. So many of them have limited educational experiences in Viet Nam, and somehow when they got here, their parents knew that they needed to have the language. So there was some manipulation with the age. And we know that happens. But they seem to*

> *think that school is important. My absentee rate is real low. Kids come and they ask for extra work, which is unusual. I could probably only name 5 regular teachers who have had that experience.*

Migrant parents are willing to admit that migration interferes with their children's education and some have made a conscious effort to adapt their lifestyles to the requirements of school attendance.

> *Mr. G said they stopped moving so that the children could go to one school and not have to be changing schools constantly. 'If you move them, they don't learn, they just miss too much. They need to study because if not, they are always going to be picking tomatoes'*

(migrant mother)

> *Mrs. M says they don't leave Texas until school is out. They return to the home-base in October. She said the children start school in New York, and then go back to their TX school. She pre-enrolls them in TX so they have no problems when they arrive.*

The ethnographers not only collected information on education and schooling from migrant parents but from their children as well. Over and over the ethnographers collected positive comments about the benefits of education.

(Migrant woman)

> *For everybody, education is important. For all of our children because at times in a certain point it is important. There are young people, ignorant, that cannot read or write. In order to know how to defend themselves, they need to know how to speak English because to work, whatever work we are able to develop, young people, mature people and old people, we know that."*

Most of the time, the parents want something better than they have for their children, and they see education as one means to that end.

Most of the time, the parents want something better than they have for their children, and they see education as one means to that end.

> *I didn't finish school, but now I got kids that are doing pretty good in school. J's getting straight A's. The rest, well they were doing pretty good, but two of em got married, and he went up to high school a couple of years and then got involved with his girlfriend and they had to quit school and they never went back again. He don't have his GED, but he needs it bad. See, if you have that piece of paper, then you can get a real permanent job.*

> *I didn't wanna be a laborer all my life you know? STILL don't wanna be a laborer all my life. But it's hard to tell your kids that. Just to keep up with your schooling and maybe you'll have a better chance at your life than field work and field work. Trying to better something for them . . .*

Migrants often talk to their children about the importance of studying so that they will have opportunities.

(Migrant male)

> *Working in the fields is something very hard. I say to them, 'Here in this house, everyone, I want you to have a degree'. I will know how to dress you, I will know how you are going to study, but you are going to have a career, in order that when tomorrow comes, you will have your degree, you will work in air conditioning in the shade, and you will not walk in the fields like I did.' This is what I say to them.*

For non-English speaking migrants, the key to success in breaking the migrant cycle i.e. obtaining a job other than in the fields is for their children to learn to speak and write English. With these skills, they can learn a trade and not be bound to the fields. Some, as the man above, believe that the children need a degree from high school in order to have a good job. Without exception, migrants interviewed wanted their children to have an education.

(migrant family that only moves in the summer)

> *We don't have very much, but we don't follow the lettuce because we want the children to stay in school.*

Unfortunately, the desire for their children to study and get an education many times conflicts with the economic necessities of the family. One ethnographer interviewed young people who had dropped out of high school. One girl, an excellent student, quit high school because her mother was sick and couldn't work in the fields. The father was not living with the family. The daughter took her mother's place in the fields.

> *The mother said, "She works because I can't."*
>
> *The next week I saw the mother in the fields working even though she was ill. She told me she had to work because they needed the money for her to have an operation.*

The economic pressures on the other children are enormous, as can be seen from the following quote from a student who dropped out.

> *But this drop out thing, for other kids, that's a tough one. A lot of times it's financial problems. If your family has financial problems, they may need you to drop out. You can see your family growing and little brothers and sisters running around all over the place, and there's pressure to help out. And also, they see their other friends with cars and clothes and they want them too. So they start to work instead.*

On the other hand, some parents saw education to be so important that they created object lessons to keep their children in school. These children were taken to the fields to work for a day or two to show them how hard the work is and what it is like without an education. In the following case, the boy had cut classes at the high school and was suspended from school.

. . . some parents saw education to be so important that they created object lessons to keep their children in school.

> *I talked to him and told him that school was very important and if you have your degree, perhaps you can have workers. You can order and they cannot order. But because you have not done this, let's go and work in the fields. You are not going to (high school). You are going to work. The second day that he went to work, because at 5:00 in the morning he had to get up to go to ______________ (name of town) for the melon, the second day that he went, he began crying with me here in the night, saying, 'I am never going to be absent, you are never going to frown at me again.' I said to him, 'You have always said the same, you always told me the same thing, and I told you that it was necessary to study, but you never did pay attention. What do you want me to do now when you have a suspension for one week? What can I do? Throw you out of the house? Or you have to work like I did. Why do you think that I sent you to work with me?' He answers me, 'Because you love me.'*

Migrant parents recognized the value of higher education. An interesting point that came out of interviews with older migrant parents is the fact that they believe a high school diploma is often not good enough to get a good job. If their children are going to get good jobs, they will need a trade or college education.

(Black migrant parents in New York)

> *Q: Do you think that a high school diploma can get them a better job?*
> *Mom and Dad: Oh yeah.*
> *Mom: It may help them get a better job but they may have to pick up another course, you know.*

> *Q: Like what?*
> *Mom: Mostly anything. I don't think there's too many good jobs you can get with just a high school education.*
> *Q: So, you have to go beyond high school now?*
> *Dad: Yeah, unless . . . for a good pay job you've got to have some kind of degree.*

(migrant mother, Anglo)

> *Q: What do you think your chances of getting a good job are now with just a high school diploma?*
> *Mom: There isn't a chance, not a good paying job. I don't think there is any chance at all. Cause all the jobs I've had have paid minimum wage, part time, you can't even get a full time job.*
> *Q: Because of lack of training and college education?*
> *Mom: Yeah*
> *Q: So, how do you feel about this? What do you expect for your children's education?*
> *Mom: I want them to go as far as they can, I'm going to do anything possible. If they want to go to college, I'm gonna get money somehow, you know . . . borrow or something. If they want to go I'm gonna do my darnest to let them go.*

Quality of Education from the Migrant Perspective

Migrants have the opportunity to evaluate the quality of education in various states. They experience a number of contrasts between school systems, as can be seen from the following example:
(migrant mother, Hispanic, New York)

> *Q: They never are at the same level?*
> *Mom: That's right because here they are teaching one thing and in (home-base state) they are behind (the schools, not the children). Here is more advanced than there. I have always noticed that, and now my children want to stay here. That's why I am here.*

This is something the children recognized as a source of frustration with school. One migrant mother described her 10 year old daughter's problems with the differences in curricula between a home-base state and the one they traveled to upstream.

> *She says like she wouldn't wanna go to school over there [upstream], because she said she already learned over here what she's supposed to learn and she's almost out of school, and she's gonna get to [upstream state] and she's gonna be behind and she's afraid to fail. She'll be behind because whatever they're studying, they're way*

> *behind here, and they're way high over there already. She likes it though because if she goes to school up there and then comes back to [home-base town], she already knows everything that's going on up there. But she don't like it when she's gotta go over there, because they're way ahead and she's behind. And she gotta catch up. When she goes up to [upstream state], they're already way ahead. So they're not teaching them as much down here, that's the problem.*

On the other hand, migrant families also receive from some educators' kindness and true understanding of their needs and the constraints of their lifestyles.

> *Sra. (SPANISH SURNAME) also likes the teachers in H_____. 'I go to school sometimes every Friday, 'cause we only work til 12 on Friday and we go to town to buy groceries 'cause we always work Saturdays. And once in a while they let us take him out early so he can go with us and so he doesn't have to go home and stay home alone all by himself. He likes to go to school a lot. He has to go to school there! One year he said that the teachers told him he didn't have to go to school up there 'cause he had all his tests early and he was already finished. He was in the third grade. So he told me this and he told his teachers up there that he didn't have to go. But they told him he did have to go. I think he made it up 'cause he didn't like going then."*

EDUCATION versus THE SCHOOL: The hassles

While migrants value education, "schools" all too often were seen in a negative light by parents who would otherwise have been supportive of their child's education. Parents were normally very appreciative when the school contacted them about their child. However, many mentioned that contact was made only when the child was doing poorly or causing problems in school. One migrant mother pointed this out in an interview:

While migrants value education, "schools" all too often were seen in a negative light by parents who would otherwise have been supportive of their child's education.

> *She says that she has visited with P's teachers on many occasions and has always found them to be very nice and understanding. All of her trips to school involved some problem with P, either failing grades or some complaint about his behavior, or, on one occasion, P's complaint to his mother that one of the teachers had mistreated him. On this occasion Sra. (Spanish surname) went to the teacher to find out what had happened, and was told that P 'must have misunderstood what the teacher said, because the teacher said that she "would never treat anybody that way and that she likes P, he's a good boy.'" Sra. (Spanish sur-*

> *name) can't remember what it was that had upset P at the time, but was satisfied that the teacher meant no harm and the issue had been resolved.*

Not all parents are quite so diligent. Their work schedule prohibits them from visiting the school during the day and some parents expressed the need to be able to contact the schools or teachers in the evening. Even when the timing is right, migrant parents sometimes have difficulty communicating with the schools.

The mother of one boy suspended from high school told an ethnographer that she didn't know why they had suspended her son. As a result of this suspension and other absences, he lost all of his credits for the year. The mother called the school to find out why he had been suspended and was put on hold by someone in the school for 20 minutes.

> *I had to take care of the baby so I hung up. The kids can't say anything to the teachers or they will suspend them I don't understand why they don't just give them more work, more homework instead of removing them from the class, suspending them from school.*

In this case, the ethnographer talked to the boy and was told he was suspended because his teacher told him that he was not going to amount to anything, "just like his parents," and the boy got mad and yelled at the teacher. He would not tell his parents why he was suspended.

In a few instances migrant parents expressed concern for the safety of girls.

(Hispanic migrant)

> *When I asked again why his three daughters had dropped out of school, Mrs. C said she'd tell me the real reason. Her husband said he took the girls out of school and sent them to work because he was afraid of the bad influences they were getting in school. The girls were older and very attractive, and the boys were very bold with them. He worried all the time until they got home from school.*

And there are times when nothing is wrong with the schools, education is simply a victim of the home environment and the children's desire to escape.

And there are times when nothing is wrong with the schools, education is simply a victim of the home environment and the children's desire to escape.

> *Q: Going back to studying and school, I talked to B and she told me how many migrant kids your age are dropping out of school and not finishing. I see a lot 14 year old girls that are already married or run away and get pregnant, like that. Why is that going on?*

> *V: Sometimes it's the parents. They just want to get out of the house cause they don't like the parents and they run away. I know a lot of girls that run away and now they are back with their families cause they didn't make it.*
> *Q: What's so bad about living with their parents?*
> *V: Well, one girl got married because she said that her father treated her real bad. So they just go away cause they don't like the parents, so they go and get married.*
> *Q: So they think that getting married is better than being at home? And then what happens? Do they end up coming back?*
> *V: Some of them do.*

Regardless of whether or not they "make it with the guy," their educational opportunities have virtually bypassed them. A few return to school, and a few manage to get a GED, but most return to the fields, and within a short while divorce and remarry.

Positive and Negative Aspects of School: The Student's View

An ethnographer had the opportunity to interview approximately 45 migrant young people, ranging in age from 4 to 25 years. Children candidly spoke of what they liked and disliked about school and what their needs and desires were for the future. Older children especially, discussed some period of adjustment to their new school and to their "American classmates". The term "American" referring to "white" people was used both by both Mexican-American children migrating within the United States and migrant children from Mexico

The following is an interview with three girls, 11 and 12 years of age.

> *Ethnographer: Do you girls like school? Are there differences in this school and the other ones that you go to?*
> *Girl 1: I like school. The difference is here they make us make reports, and in ____________ sometimes they don't. My favorite subject is math.*
> *Girl 2: I like school. Everything in it. I have problems in division. We have a helper named ______________ (name) who comes after lunch. It is good to have her. She helps with everything. The classes are in English and Spanish.*
> *Girl 3: My favorite subject is math. I like summer school best. We go swimming, and they don't give us too much work. Sometimes we don't go to school.*

> *Ethnographer: What don't you like about school?*
> *All three girls: The Americans call us names.*
> *(Observation: The girls looked down when they said this and were upset.)*
> *Ethnographer: What do you do when they call you names?*
> *Girl 1: We talk in Spanish so they don't understand.*
> *Girl 2: It is worse when we first come. Now they are our friends.*

The children expressed the need for more bilingual teachers and aides. One migrant girl wrote:

> *I think they should have more teachers that teach English and Spanish. Like for those who don't know English there's teachers who'll teach English, and those who don't know Spanish there's teachers who'll teach Spanish. So what I mean is there should be teachers who are bilingual. I also think they should have bilingual counselors. Sometimes migrants have problems in school, and they need someone to talk too. I only have one bilingual teacher in 7 period. I really feel comfortable because she's bilingual.*

Teachers have a great impact on how well migrant children adjust to school. Children talked about good teachers and bad teachers. Three teenagers were talking about their fear of speaking English in front of the class because the American students would make fun of them. A teacher tried to help the student to overcome her fear.

> *I used to be like that and one of my teachers at home she told me not to be embarrassed. Down here I was real embarrassed to read in front of the class because they laughed and the teacher said, 'Just act as if you are all alone, reading.' But still sometimes I get embarrassed to get in front of the class."*

Another migrant child described a favorite class.

> *Our history class was good. We cooked foods from different places, and he made us feel good.*

Some young migrants like to attend school is because it gives them an opportunity to socialize. For example, the majority of the evening school students work in the fields during the day, come home, take a shower, eat something if they have time, and go on to school. Since migrant housing is scattered all over the county, young people don't have a chance to interact with each other. Evening school provides a place and time for peer interaction. The following comes from a migrant school counselor:

> *Counselor: The kids that come to the night school are those who are choosing to come.*
> *Q: Why do they choose to come?*
> *Counselor: The first thing is they have a chance to socialize. I think that teenagers, not just migrants, have a normal need to socialize. A lot of the learning that goes on among teenagers, and this goes across cultures, regardless of the impact on other aspects of family or whatever, they learn from each other, and there's a great desire and drive to be with peers. Some people say, 'Well I guess we'll just have to allow for that (socialization) and try to get education in.' I think, to the contrary, it's very important to acknowledge that and promote it.*

In contrast to the positive aspects of migrant education programs, and education in general, many migrant children are the victims of discrimination and targets for abuse by bigoted teachers and cruel peers. In one of the interviews, migrant children described teachers who made them feel bad.

In contrast to the positive aspects of migrant education programs, and education in general, many migrant children are the victims of discrimination and targets for abuse by bigoted teachers and cruel peers.

> *I can't write well in Spanish. I was in night school and the teacher in night school began laughing when she read what I had written in Spanish because I guess I hadn't spelled some words right. She told me. "If you don't know Spanish, how can you learn English?"*

Migrant children, like their parents in the upstream environment, sometimes are treated as if they are invisible. Lack of attention given to the migrant students by the teachers was mentioned often by students as well as parents. One girl who dropped out of school said:

> *One of our teachers gave a lot of attention to the other students but none to us, the migrants. It was in a class of English. We felt bad and so sometimes we didn't go to classes. They never gave us sufficient attention. It is better not to go. The teachers made distinctions between the different students. They need to be strict with everyone, not just with us.*

One of the themes that occurred in the interviews with migrant children was the problem of adjustment. Changing schools is hard on students, even though it becomes easier in school after new friends are made. One ethnographer interviewed migrant students in (state) with the following result.

> *Q: What's it like to have to change schools more than once?*

> *G: It's hard because you got to have new friends, you have to know all your teachers and how they are.*
> *V: You have to get used to a school. Because when you go to a new school, you think: it's going to be much harder here, and you haven't even tried it.*
> *Q: You just assume that it's going to be harder? Why?*
> *V: Cause you don't know anything, you don't know what they are going to teach, you don't know the people around.*
> *Q: Are you scared when you go into a new school?*
> *G: Yeah.*
> *V: I'm nervous, you don't know nothing.*
> *G: Like this year is my first year in P High, and I didn't know nobody except for 2 or 3 people.*
> *Q: But there are a lot of Mexicans in this school. Have you ever gone to a school where there weren't a lot of Mexicans, where you are kind of different?*
> *G: I did in S. There were Cubans and Puerto Ricans, but not Mexicans.*
> *Q: Is that different?*
> *G: Well, in a way it is because they have different customs and their language is different. They talk Spanish, but some words are different.*

Arriving after the school year has begun or arriving just before school is over is especially difficult for children. Students often pressure their parents to let them go back to their home-base states to start school early. Parents of older children seem generally supportive of the idea and make arrangements for their older children to return with relatives. A migrant child expressed this problem in an interview with one of the ethnographers.

> *I asked J if she minded moving with her family. She said, 'It bothered me to come into school late because it put me behind.' J told me that when she was in elementary school she would fall behind in reading mostly. She told me about the time they came back late from Illinois, and she was going to attend a school that she had never attended before here in Florida. When she went in to register, she was put in a classroom and tested. J said she did not know she was going to be tested, and she wasn't prepared. As a result, she failed the test. Since then, she was always placed on a lower level in reading.*

Another problem migrant children face is the difficulty of making friends in a new location.

> *R: It's hard because you have to make new friends*

> *every year. You leave them; and when you come back, they are no longer the same.*
> *Q: You never found the same students?*
> *R: Aha, because they also came and left. So, no friends. I almost didn't have any friends and when I found one, well . . . we have to leave them behind.*
> *J: Most of my friends are Mexicans. I don't really know any white people, and I don't like blacks. I get along mostly with Mexicans*

One of the results of this frustration is that the children give up trying to cope, as this quote from a migrant student indicates.

> *Of course, some migrant kids are corrupted.*
> *Q: Corrupted?*
> *Yeah, because they don't like moving around all the time a lot, and it's hard to make friends and to adjust. Others can react to that with a real bad attitude. You know, you hate it and you've got your mind made up you're not gonna like it no matter what. So then you're resentful 'cause just when you start liking a place in spite of yourself, then you have to go. A lot of kids just can't deal with this, so they drop out, 'cause school is just such an awful place for 'em, just a place where they're the new kid in town over and over again, and they get no peace. It just gets too hard to keep up the effort to adjust after a while.*

One of the programmatic solutions to this problem is to provide special counselors for the students, who can intervene when they see a problem, or are available when the children have problems that need to be discussed. This solution does work for some students. Others, are reluctant to talk although there are migrant personnel in the schools to help the students.

One of the programmatic solutions to this problem is to provide special counselors for the students, who can intervene when they see a problem, or are available when the children have problems that need to be discussed.

> *Ethnographer: Do you have anyone in school that you can talk to if you have a problem?*
> *Teenager: There are people, but I never talk to them. I wouldn't feel right.*

Who Makes the Educational Decisions

At some point, usually during their teenage years, migrant children are faced with a decision of whether to stay in school and complete their education, or to take advantage of their growing economic contribution in the fields and drop out. The decision process has a number of facets and involves the presence or absence of adult support for the child's education, the child's self image, and the child's prior experience and current status in school.

Parental and Adult Influence

Every migrant child who successfully completed his or her education had at least one person in the family who supported and encouraged him or her.

Every migrant child who successfully completed his or her education had at least one person in the family who supported and encouraged him or her. Sometimes this was a parent who was determined that the child not continue the same hard life he or she had. Many times it was another important family member, usually a sibling or even a grandparent, aunt or uncle. Whoever that person was, he or she made a critical difference in the child's academic success. Some of the following quotes show the influence that parents may have on the child.

(migrant student who just graduated from high school)

> *See my dad, he's the kind of dad who, I don't know how to say it in English, pero le da el apoyo, sabes? He really gives you a lot. He says, 'You wanna go to college? Go! If you have time for this, then you have time for that. Just take it slow and do it right, don't hurry with it or you might mess up and get frustrated, or you might miss something.' He really helps out a lot, with as much money as he can. Like with C [a sister in college], he helps her what he can with money, and she works too in the summer so she can help pay. But he also just helps you out by encouraging you.*

(migrant woman who left the stream and works as a receptionist at a health clinic)

> *My Mom and Dad never asked too much from us. The only thing was to finish school and make the best of our lives*

When asked what, in her opinion, made the difference between migrant children who finished school and those who didn't, this woman replied:

> *The key to getting an education is the parents. Mom and Dad could have done like everybody else and put us to work, but they didn't.*

(Hispanic migrant mother in Florida)

> *Him and I always worked; our motive was to send the children to school. We always looked for places where the kids could work during the summer to help pay the bills. We went to work at 5 AM. The older ones went to school, and a lady took care of the little ones. When the older kids came back from school, they picked the little ones up from the baby sitter and took care of them until we got home"*

When the parents are not influential, other relatives may have an important effect on education, either pro or con.

(Adult Migrant Education Staff Member)

> *The influence of relatives is very strong when it comes to children's attitudes about school. If an uncle tells them, 'you can weld and not know how to read,' they believe him. Children look up to the adults because family ties are very important among Hispanics. The Director of Adult Migrant Ed. mentioned cases of students who had dropped out of school to go to work to pay for his/her parents trip to Texas or to pay a hospital bill. Family comes first, even over advanced studies. The importance of what the education of a child may mean to the family in the future is not perceived."*

The effect of family on the child is very strong, and even may be a cause for conflict within the family, as is shown by this conversation:

> *Ms. W, the migrant program supervisor, said she had just finished talking to Mrs. M, the old crew leader's daughter-in-law. Mrs. M was worried because one of her sons was threatening to drop out of school, and she didn't want him to. The boy missed 22 days of school last month. Everybody says he had to go to Texas because his grandfather was having an operation. Ms. W says she is now hearing that the boy never left Florida. The health worker, who knows this family well, said the grandfather had a lot to do with the boy's attitude because he "bribed" the children with presents and money to keep them around him, and keep his influence over them. He often takes the children out of school to take them to Texas with him to act as translators. The health worker, who has talked about this many times with the grandfather, says he believes that education is a waste of time because these kids are going to end up working in the fields anyway, and to work in the fields no education is necessary.*

In many cases, the parental influence over the child's education appears to revolve around respect of authority. This respect is a value held by many migrant groups. Another influence is who controls the resources that support the children. One migrant parent stated:

> *Mr. K: Well, at least, if I'm taking care of him, then he will have to listen to me. I'm going to be the one to make the decision. But, when he grows up to be a man, and he starts to take care of himself, then I can't make no decision for him no*

> *more. So, him is free to do what he wants to do. But I can tell him the difference, and then it's something him want to do it or don't want to do it.*

Other parents held the same basic view that children may make decisions that affect their own life. Some parents place an age when they would let the children begin to make their own decisions. In many cases, like the following one, the children were given the opportunity to work at an early age, but the pressure to complete school was maintained.

> *Ethnographer: Who makes the educational decisions in the family?*
> *L: My husband and I make them together.*
> *Ethnographer: When do you think that the children should help out the family by working?*
> *L: My son is 12 and he wants to work. He is too young. He has to wait until he is 14. My husband and I make $24,000 to $28,000 a year so my son doesn't qualify for any work program.*
> *Ethnographer: Do you think that it is important that your children finish school?*
> *L: Yes, we think that it is important to finish school. We are interested in having them finish. We want them to go to the University. They have uncles who are studying there. M, who teaches 3rd grade in (town) is a relative. She went to school there.*

Children's decision making power

Even though parents and others influence the children staying in school, one of the most interesting findings was that the ultimate decision to stay in school or drop out is made by the children themselves. The parents have influence, but when the children start being viewed as adults, or become increasingly independent workers, the decision-making power shifts. Parents, are put in an ambivalent position about their authority (both hypothetical and practical authority) over their children's educational decisions.

Even though parents and others influence the children staying in school, one of the most interesting findings was that the ultimate decision to stay in school or drop out is made by the children themselves.

> *Ethnographer: Who in your house makes the educational decisions?*
> *L: My husband and I make them in agreement.*
> *Ethnographer: Your two children made the decision not to go to school. Why was that?*
> *L: Over there my son helps his father. My girl didn't want to study anymore.*
> *Ethnographer: Do you think that education is important?*
> *L: Yes, it is important. The future of our children depends on education.*

> *Ethnographer: Do you want your youngest daughter to keep studying?*
> *L: Yes, I hope that she has the opportunity to continue.*

By age 15, many migrant children, have total control over the decision as to whether or not they stay in school.

> *Ethnographer: If one of your children wants to leave school, is this a decision of the family or your spouse.*
> *L: Here in my house the decision is made by my children, to leave and not to return (to school). He doesn't want to go. Their father and I send them so that they would know how to defend themselves to take advantage (of the schools), but I don't know if they told the truth, or they were deceiving us, but they said they were always fighting with others, or an American would put out their foot and trip them and make them fall, or say 'Mexican greaser', or hit them. There were always fights between the Americans and the Mexicans. I don't know if it is the truth or it is lies of theirs, but we never wanted them to make the decision to quit school. They made the decision and didn't want to go. R, because there were boys of the same age, but taller, larger, and they grabbed him in the bathroom and told him that he had to smoke a cigarette. He said in English, 'Que no, que no.' because he didn't want any marijuana. And they said, 'yes, R, you have to smoke marijuana.' 'No, I don't want to, I don't want to.' And when they put a knife (navaja) to hit him, that was when he decided to go to the fields. He refused to go to school. It is hard.*

If the children make this major decision, the schools can have a significant impact on migrant drop-out rates by modifying the beliefs and behaviors of the children themselves, and by getting the parents to help.

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Numerous examples of this fact came to light in the research in all of the migrant streams.

> *Ethnographer: Parents and young people told me that the decision to stay in school was the child's decision, because if they did not want to be there, they wouldn't be learning and it would be better if they worked. Young people were also encouraged to take what interested them in school. As one migrant mother said, 'If we choose for her she is not going to like it and she won't learn. She will learn with classes that are interesting to her.'*

Many migrant parents expressed impotence when it came to making their children stay in school to finish their education.

(migrant father, Hispanic)

> *Father: It depends on the child, it depends on who the father sees as putting more effort into school.*
> *Q: So, the one who is doing better is the one that remains in school?*
> *Father: I guess. . . .*
> *Q: And the one that is not doing so well, do they take him out of school?*
> *Father: You don't take him out, but the child says, 'I don't want to go, I don't want to go.' I've met many people who says, 'I don't like it' and they stop studying, and what is the father going to do about that?*
> *Q: If I said I wanted to quit my father would have killed me!!!!*
> *Father: It depends on how the father sees it, because if the father sees the child is no good in school, the Mexicans what they have is that. The older people when a child is born they say he is going to help me when he grows up. And if the child himself doesn't want to study, the father says, 'it's better for him to quit school and start helping me.'*

(another migrant father)

> *I asked Mr. P what he would do if his daughter changed her mind and decided to drop out of school and go to work in the fields. Mr. P said he would try to advise her not to make that mistake, but ultimately he could not force her to go. He said that after they turn 16, children can get out of school. If the child did not want to go to school, it would be useless to force her, he thought. He said he could make her go, but she would find a way to get out or leave the school.*

The frustration felt by a parent who would like to see something better for her children is evident in the following notes:

> *She wants her children to finish school and get an education, but she is frustrated and confused and doesn't know what to do to keep them in school. She says she keeps telling them to study, study so that they won't have to work as hard and have such a rough life like they do now, but they don't listen to her, she can't get through to them. F hates school, is constantly goofing off in all of his classes, and refuses to stay after school for tutoring although he is failing everything. He came in later while we were still talking, and laughed and laughed through the whole conversation. Not much seems to phase this kid. He has no interest in school, seems to have no desire to think ahead,*

and is very fatalistic about his future. If he doesn't finish school, he says he'll work. Doing what? What is he qualified for? For hoeing sugarbeets of course! His mother told me that even though he was too young to work last summer (the rancher told her that only 14 years and older) he refused to go to the summer migrant school, preferring instead to hangout with them in the fields and work on the sly. While talking with me yesterday in school he did say he preferred working to going to school, but today his mother described him as crying and crying because it was so hot, or he was too tired, and he couldn't finish his row, etc. He was embarrassed to have his mother tell me this. She told me that this year she wants him to go to school there because the rancher won't let him work anyway. He is very small for his age and slightly built and she fears the rancher won't believe he is old enough. It seems highly unlikely, however, given the dire straits this family is in (financially) that she will not let him work again this year like she did last.

Her daughter L is 16 years old and in the 7th grade. Her mother fears she will not finish high school. L is ashamed to be as old as she is and only in the 7th grade, especially considering her younger sister of 15 is a 9th grader. She doesn't like school as a result. Her mother says that only yesterday L came home and told her she does like school and does want to finish. Her mother had no idea why the sudden change in attitude. Her mother had no idea whether or not L had ever been tested for any kind of learning disabilities and had never inquired at school as to why she kept failing classes. Last summer L also worked in the fields and did not attend summer school. When asked if she wanted to go there this summer, she just smiled and said she didn't know. Her mother seemed to agree it was a good idea for L to go to this school so that 'maybe she would do better' in school when she got back to (state), but didn't seem real optimistic about her chances of actually going to the program. She then explained that it's just her and her two older daughters working that earn the money to barely pay for everything.

As much as both F and L need the extra help, it seems highly unlikely that either of them will get it in the summer migrant program this summer. She says she is just grateful that none of her children are into 'serious trouble,' that none of them run around at night or go out too much. 'It's only this one little problem with school that I have with them, other than that they are good kids.'

Portraits of Migrants' Views of Success and Failure

Many children feed the migrant cycle for another generation, unable to break the cycle.

Many children feed the migrant cycle for another generation, unable to break the cycle. For migrants a successful person is "someone who has steady employment and does not have to work in the fields." These individuals are looked up to as models for the younger children. They become community examples. An ethnographer collected the following descriptions of an "example"—someone who was successful in breaking out of the migrant lifestyle.

> *This boy "liked school" and was "very smart" and finished high school when he was sixteen. He had gone to Saturday and evening classes even though he didn't need them to graduate, and when he finished early he joined the Army for 4 years. Now that his 1st tour of duty is almost up, he is planning to re-enlist for 20 years. He has a wife and small baby, is very happy and is obviously a "success story" in the eyes of these people.*

As another example, an ethnographer interviewed a young man who had recently graduated from college with a degree in engineering. The ethnographer wanted to know why he was able to finish school when the rest of his friends did not. J said that he was the first young person in the local migrant community who had graduated from college.

> *I met him in the migrant camp one Friday afternoon when he had come to play soccer with his school friends from earlier years. He and his friends had been playing soccer there every Friday afternoon for 10 years. J was standing outside talking to a longtime school friend who was still working in the fields. His friend introduced me to J and proudly told me that he had graduated from college. J is 26 years old. I visited J and his mother in their home in a nearby town. J had lived with his family for many years in a private migrant camp and traveled back to Mexico every winter. The boy's parents were very supportive of education; and when J was in the 10th grade, the family decided to quit moving to allow J to finish school.*
>
> *The rancher where they worked let them have a house for only $1 a day.*
>
> *I asked J why did he think he made it and others didn't.*
>
> **J: When I was a kid I always wanted to be somebody. My first goal was to become a professional soccer player. That was my first goal.'**
>
> *J was an excellent soccer player, and when he was*

16 years old, he was offered a contract with a professional soccer team. However, when the manager discovered that he was only 16, he told J. that he would have to bring his father to sign for him because he was underage.

J: When I told my father, he got upset. He said that he didn't want me to play soccer. He told me to pursue a career.

J. told me that he was upset for about a year.

J contributes the fact that he was able to make it through school through the help of family and friends. He was able to play soccer for another team, and the coach told him that they would pay for his tuition and books. J said that his parents helped him a lot.

J has other brothers and sisters who did not finish school. I asked him why he was able to get a degree and they were not.

J: In my family it was because I was dedicated. You know, when you are in college, this is a big problem, you get temptations from women, from liquor and everything and this is a big problem. That is the problem that I see in college right now. About 75% of the students they just go there to have a good time.'

Life in college was not easy for J. He had trouble with the other students.

J: You know, instead of helping each other, we are always trying to destroy each other. That's what I have discovered between Mexicans, Hispanics, Chicanos and everything. Like during my last year in school, you know the friends that I used to talk to a lot, very nicely, at the end they didn't want to talk to me. Mainly because I was almost done. The only good close friend that I had was that guy that I graduated together with.

J. says that he wouldn't have made it through school without this Hispanic friend.

J: Sometimes when I was feeling down, upset, tired, he was always pushing me, 'You have to do that. It's for your own good.' . . . He really helped me a lot.

J told me that sometimes he was very lonely because he had to stay by himself when his parents went back to Mexico. Because of his family he stayed in school.

We talked about his friends in the camp and I asked J why they didn't make it through school.

J: The biggest problem was that they were always thinking about making money. In those days, as soon as you reached the age of 15 or 16 years old, you were allowed to work in the fields, you know, do some hoeing, tomato hoeing, and what they were thinking, as long as they had some chance to make some money, they went for it. They didn't care about their education for the future. That's the problem. Most of the people don't think about the future. Another problem was that some parents did not encourage their sons to go to school.'

J.'s mother told me that a lot of the parents were at fault.

M: A lot of reports say that the parents cannot maintain themselves with the money that the parents earn, for the rent, but not in all of the cases. The families that came from ______________ (town) said that they could not maintain themselves, and they took out the kids to work. But there were more of them that were ambitious and wanted money and wanted their children to work from field to field. They should not have. They think that way, but they did not think of tomorrow, did not think that their children should be passing time studying.'

J has a good job with an engineering firm. He wants to make sure that his younger brother, who is in the 10th grade, continues to study so that he can get a degree and a good job also. Without help and encouragement from friends and family J. feels he could not have made it through school. Because of this he plans to encourage his brother to stay in school

J: I am going to make sure he pursues a degree in the university. Especially here in ______________. That's what my father told me, very often, 'My son's going to be in your hands from now on.' And I really appreciated that because I'm going to make sure he goes in the right direction all of the time. I'm going to ask him to show me his progress reports every month, every couple of months and especially I'm going to help him with money, because being a student, you are always poor. You don't have money, especially like, for example, you meet beautiful ladies and they want you to take them out. How can you take them out with no money. And since I understand the life of a student, I am going to make sure he goes in the right direction all the time. I know that sometimes he is going to need money,

he is going to need my moral support and I'm going to make sure I provide everything for him.'

Not all life histories collected by the ethnographers revealed the amount of success achieved by J.

The following chronology recorded from a migrant family can be considered typical for many families and their children. One of the things that is most typical about it, is the tremendous mixture of success, and failure. Success comes against great odds and failure is measured against middle class ideals. When measured against migrant ideals, this chronology reveals much more success than failure.

Success comes against great odds and failure is measured against middle class ideals.

(R described each of his brother's and sister's experiences with school)

> *My oldest brother, he's 32 now. He graduated from N. Next, he's 29. He didn't graduate. He got married and stopped going in the 11th grade when he only needed one more credit to graduate. He never got his GED, but he has a good job and is working. My oldest sister is 28. She graduated from high school in W.*
>
> *Next is my brother who is 27. He dropped out in the 9th grade. He thought he was tough, you know? But he had some real problems. He wanted out of the migrant life and couldn't deal with it too good. He got into drugs. He was the smartest brother we had, too. He used to help us with our hardest homework like it was nothing!*
>
> *Then next is my sister who's 26. She dropped out, got married and now is divorced. She didn't like school.*
>
> *Then was my other sister, she's 25. She has real serious health problems. She had a heart fever when she was little [rheumatic] and lost most of her hearing. So she has a speech impediment because she couldn't hear the words right to say them back. In school she started dropping from the 7th all the way down to the 5th grade because of the teachers' attitudes. They even wanted to send her to a special school for Mongoloids, for retarded people, even though she's not retarded. But my daddy took her out of there and saw she got back into regular school. She didn't graduate, but she's married now and has a family. Her little boy has a speech impediment too, because he's learning how to talk from her, and when she says a word funny, that's how he learns to say it. But they are working on that at the school with therapy or something, he won't need to go to a special school for that either.*

> *Then there's J, she's 23. She finished high school, but didn't like it so she didn't go on to college.*
>
> *Then my next sister is 22. She finished [high school]. She just got married. She has 2 years of college, but she quit 'cause she didn't like it. She has her secretary's certificate, and now she's looking for work.*
>
> *Then there's me, I'm 20. I finished high school, I got 1 year of college, but it was too hard. I just got married in '86, and now I'm looking for work. I got some problems, it's kinda hard to find work. I'm not going north with them this year because I just got married, and I wanna stay here and hopefully find a job.*
>
> *Then there's C, she's 19. She's working for her 4 year degree for her teaching certificate. She works in the summer and then goes back to college when she comes back.*
>
> *Then I have another little brother in junior high, he's 14. He's doing pretty good I guess.*

The economics of migrant labor dictate that the more people working in the field, the more will be earned.

One variable in the equation of who stays in school and who does not is the economics of migrant labor. The economics of migrant labor dictate that the more people working in the field, the more will be earned. If enough people work, someone may have the opportunity to go to school, as the following student states:

> *D: I went in the morning to school and got out at 3o'clock. And then we would go to work at 3. And then I worked til 9 or 10 at night. The sun doesn't set there 'til like 10, and it comes up like at 4 or something like that. But we work a full day at school and a full day in the fields, too. It was hard. And there were some kids that didn't go to school, and they didn't take advantage of it (migrant education).*
>
> *C: Maybe it was because there was less people in their families, and they needed more workers.*
>
> *D: Yeah, 'cause like in my family we have lots of workers, so I could go to school. That's why I went 'cause I've got seven brothers and sisters, and I was the only one who went to school. Everyone else worked. See, I needed a credit and they didn't. So I went. They didn't need credits, but they also just didn't want to go over there. They started going, but they quit. It was hard, they said, and they didn't want to do it any more. Get up in the morning and they were all tired, it was a lot to do. My sister is gonna graduate this semester anyway though. She used to come to Saturday classes, too, but she's already got her credits, she's a senior, so she doesn't come anymore. She doesn't have too.*

Summary

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 discussed variables which operate prior to, during and after migration. These variables have an impact on the migrants' lives and assist in delineating the culture of migrancy. Among these variables are 1) the lifestyles of the migrants, 2) their cultural background, 3) conditions of the old environment and reasons for leaving, 4) reasons for relocating and conditions of the new environment and 5) fulfillment of expectations and dreams. These variable are intertwined and contribute to what has been termed the "migrant-stress' hypothesis (Maltzberg 1968; Parker, Kleiner & Needelman, 1969).

Chapter 6 discusses gender and age roles of migrants, norms for social behavior and migrants' relationships with social institutions. In general, migrant women perform the roles of wife, homemaker, child caregiver and secondary wage earner. Migrant men perform the roles of husband, father and primary wage earner. These roles, however, are often obscured due to the changing demands placed on migrants. Migrant children will at times assume adult roles in order to contribute to the family unit.

Migrants experience ambivalence when dealing with social institutions. While desiring to be independent of the "system," they find themselves dependent on institutions or institutional personnel to function within the "system." The institution with which migrants most often interact is the school. A number of factors (e.g. language, transportation, accessibility, interest, reception) influence migrants' involvement with the school. However, the lifestyle of migrants is the greatest impediment to their children's educational opportunities and successes. The lack of instructional continuity and constant readjustment to new social and educational environments are stressful to migrant children and their parents. Some parents have negotiated ways to minimize the negative effects of their lifestyle on their children's education.

The lack of instructional continuity and constant readjustment to new social and educational environments are stressful to migrant children and their parents.

Despite unfavorable odds some migrants escape the cycle of migrancy. Those who do set a standard of success and become positive role models and motivators for other migrants. Those who do not escape, continue to persevere, working and hoping that future generations will experience the success that eluded them.

The study reported herein indicates that the search for economic improvement is the primary focus of migration. This search creates a circulatory pattern between the home-base and the upstream setting. This pattern, in turn, prompts a variety of adjustment patterns: rural to rural, urban to rural, and rural to urban. Parker et al (1969) noted that people moving from rural settings to urban areas suffer mental stress. Conversely, Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1974) indicate that mental depression is more prevalent in populations sustaining an urban to rural move. While research has reported conflicting findings, one thing is obvious: migration is in itself stressful.

Due to their continual movement, migrants abandon and sacrifice affiliation with institutions and organizations that sustain physical and emotional well-being.

The constant "push" for economical survival and improvement produces conditions which have social and emotional implications. In search of income, migrants leave the familiar surroundings and support systems of the home-base. Due to their continual movement, migrants abandon and sacrifice affiliation with institutions and organizations that sustain physical and emotional well-being. To members of the stable population, this affiliation is readily available.

Denial of access to these institutions and services, be it self-induced or consequential, is associated with increased levels of distress (Roberts, 1980). This study documents the cases of migrants who have sacrificed medical care, a continuous education of their children and familial stability to earn a living in the fields.

Often migrants struggle to establish associations and conditions that will provide them social and emotional support and will buffer the effects of change. Migrants psychologically attach themselves so the home-base where they have friends and family. Nicassoi and Pate (1984) stress the importance of social support and the preservation of the family unit.

This study brings to light conditions of migrancy which researchers believe contribute to depression and anxiety. These contributing conditions are the dependency on nature and others for employment, the unpredictability of agricultural work, uncertainty of residence, underemployment and, at times, unemployment. These conditions lead to a sense of fatalistic control and a loss of efficacy.

PART IV

Part IV consists of two chapters. Chapter 7 discusses educational services provided to migrant children through Federal, State and Local funds. Discussed are Chapter I Basic programs, the Migrant Education Program, Special Education, Bilingual Education, the High School Equivalency Program, the College Assistance Migrant Program and locally sponsored educational programs for migrant students. An in-depth discussion of the Migrant Education Program and a focus on the changing role of the Program's recruiter and the administrator are presented in the latter part of Chapter 7. Chapter 8 addresses some of the questions that have been asked nationally with relation to the future of the Migrant Education Program.

Chapter 7

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO MIGRANT CHILDREN

The nature of migration and the diverse educational backgrounds of migrants result in migrant children having special and varied educational needs. The educational needs of migrant children are similar to those of the general school population who require supplementary assistance in the acquisition of basic academic skills. What makes the migrant child's needs unique is the particular environment in which the child resides. This environment is atypical to that of most school age children and has been referred to as the "culture of migrancy".

What makes the migrant child's needs unique is the particular environment in which the child resides. This environment is atypical to that of most school age children and has been referred to as the "culture of migrancy".

Locally Sponsored Programs for Migrant Students

Most school districts with a history of migrant children have developed several strategies to provide educational opportunities to them. These strategies include resource room, individualized instruction by itinerant teachers, cooperative learning, and peer tutoring. In addition many districts have summer programs. These summer programs provide structured learning activities, field trips and cultural and physical activities.

Educational programs in addition to those mentioned above have been approved for migrant students. One such program is the High School Equivalency Program (HEP). HEP is designed to assist students in completing the requirements for a secondary school equivalency diploma. Another program is the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) designed to assist students during their first year of enrollment in an Institution of Higher Education (s206.1 34 CFR Ch II (7-1-87)).

Special Education (P.L. 94-142 and P.L. 99-457)

The purpose of the Special Education Act is to provide all handicapped children with free and appropriate education. Special education and supportive services to the children are included. There are several categories of exceptionalities that are served by Special Education.

Special Education and the educational strategies it proposes were designed based on the needs of stable populations. They often do not match the specific educational needs of migrant children. Migrant children are usually two or more years below grade level in reading and mathematics skills because of constant movement. In a stable population, this two year lag in achievement is often interpreted as a mental/educational handicap. While many physically disabled migrant children are receiving services from Special Education, few learning disabled and mentally retarded migrant children who qualify for Special Education services actually receive them. The Interstate Migrant Council (1984) reported that migrant exceptional children are underserved or inappropriately served by special educators. The major factors contributing to this are a) high mobility, b) low socioeconomic status, c) language and cultural differences and d) poor general health and nutrition (Barresi, 1982; Hunter, 1982; Pyecha & Ward, 1982). These factors often result in the inability to accurately identify, assess and place mentally handicapped migrant children.

Identification of Children with Exceptionalities

The identification of migrant children with exceptionalities is a difficult task. The children do not stay in a school district long enough to complete the process of referral-assessment-placement. Even when this process has been completed in one district, often there are delays in transferring records from one school system to another and gaps in administering services.

Currently, few school personnel are knowledgeable of the specific needs of migrant exceptional children.

Currently, few school personnel are knowledgeable of the specific needs of migrant exceptional children. Such needs include first and second language development, enhancement of self-esteem, enhancement of the acculturation process and involvement of the parent in the development of the educational prescription to address the specific educational needs of the child (Baca & Harris, 1988). Therefore, the involvement of school personnel as well as community resources are required to reach an appropriate diagnosis and placement of migrant children.

Direct Educational Services

Most schools offer services to learning disabled, mentally retarded and physically impaired children. Frequently, school districts do not identify migrant children who fall into the first two categories. Consequently, they are not provided the related services prescribed by P.L. 99-457. Children diagnosed as trainable mentally retarded or socially emotionally disturbed are provided with services in settings in centralized locations within a county. For children of stable populations, transportation is provided from the home to the central location. During the harvest season, migrants live in camps isolated from traditional transportation routes. Without access to transportation, the children are not able to avail themselves of the special education services offered by the school system.

Supportive Services

The Special Education Act provides for supportive services for children diagnosed as exceptional. These supportive services include health services, transportation, and developmental and corrective services as necessary. In addition, physical and occupational therapy and recreation should be provided. Migrant children, due to their temporary and isolated residence, cannot take advantage of these services.

Bilingual Education

The Bilingual Education Act (1968) provides native language and English language instruction to elementary and secondary children. Commonly, children are placed in bilingual education programs until they are able to function in the mainstream classrooms in United States.

There are several programs funded by the Act. These programs provide English language instruction and include the cultural heritage of the children. The most commonly known is the Transitional Bilingual Education program. In this program the native language of the child is used to the extent necessary for the child to learn English (Bennett, 1988). Many migrant children qualify for bilingual education services.

The most notable Federally funded programs servicing the educational needs of migrant children are those of Chapter I Basic and the Migrant Education Program. Both these programs are authorized under Chapter I of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, P.L. 89-10, as amended.

Chapter I Basic

Chapter I Basic (P.L. 97-35, 20 USC 3801-3807, 3871-3876) provides grants to assist school districts in the development of programs that meet educational needs of disadvantaged, neglected or delinquent children (34 CFR (7-1-87) Sec 200.1). Chapter I Basic funds flow through the State to designated counties and local school districts who are entitled by law to receive them. To receive Chapter I Basic funds the local education agency (LEA) must apply to the State.

CHAPTER 1 BASIC

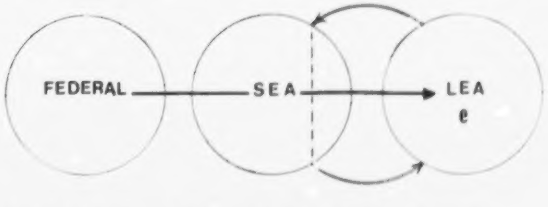

Figure 3: Flow of Federal funds for Education Agencies

The resources provided by Chapter I Basic serve children from first to twelfth grade or up to 21 years of age. To qualify for Chapter I Basic services, students must be functioning at a level one year below their grade level. The Chapter I Basic services that migrant children of agricultural workers and fishermen most often receive are 1) resource room instruction, 2) services of itinerant teachers and 3) support self-contained classroom academic support.

The Resource Room

The Resource Room is an educational service available in many schools. The objective of the Resource Room is to provide remedial instruction in basic mathematical and reading skills. The Room will usually have several computers, many high interest/low content books and other audio/visual instructional materials.

Students who do not reach a certain cut-off score on standardized reading and mathematics tests used by the school district are referred to the Resource Room. Many migrant children participate in the Resource Room. They qualify for these services since they match the description for services as defined by Chapter I. They are educationally disadvantaged, and because of many moves, usually score below grade level on standardized achievement tests.

Often the strategies and materials used in Resource Rooms have been developed for a stable or non-migratory population.

The capability of Resource Rooms to assist migrant students in overcoming their educational deficiencies is questionable. Often the strategies and materials used in Resource Rooms have been developed for a stable or non-migratory population. Migrant children are unable to relate to and consequently benefit from strategies and materials outside the realm of their experience. An example of an appropriate strategy is the use of the microcomputer as a tool for teaching writing skills as well as mathematics to migrant children. Children of migrant workers are often not computer literate. Because they cannot avail themselves of this technology at home, they should be afforded more time in the Resource Room developing basic skills through the use of this technology. Resource Rooms are often under-utilized by migrant children. More frequent assignment of migrant students to the Resource Room in combination with appropriate strategies and materials would increase migrant students' chances for school success.

Resource Teachers

Often school districts hire resource teachers with the funds available from Chapter I Basic. The role of resource teachers is to remove students from the regular classroom and provide individualized or small group instruction in reading/writing or one of the content areas. Sometimes the resource teachers are reading, special education or speech-hearing specialists. In some settings, Chapter I Basic resources are used to hire paraprofessionals who assist teachers with large classes.

Migrant children receive instruction in home base from Chapter I Basic resource teachers and/or paraprofessionals. Usually migrant children benefit greatly from such assistance. Individualized attention from the resource teacher enhances the children's self-esteem and helps them academically. In several cases the academic assistance and the individualized instruction provided by resource teachers have made the difference between migrant children staying in school or dropping out.

English as a Second Language Instruction

English as a Second Language Instruction (ESL) is a service that may be provided by Chapter I Basic to students who do not speak English as their native language. ESL teachers and materials are obtained through Chapter I funds. This instructional alternative is used by many school districts in the United States and is the method most frequently used to teach English to migrant children.

Migrant families, both in the home-base and upstream, greatly appreciate this instruction. In the ethnography many migrants expressed an interest in having their children receive instruction in English. ESL appears to be a good educational program to teach migrant children initial survival English.

The Migrant Education Program

The goal of the Migrant Education Program is to serve all eligible migrant students so that they may benefit from regular and supplementary educational and support services according to their specific educational needs.

The legislative history of the Migrant Education Program indicates that Congress intended the program to serve migrant children because they suffer from the significant ill-effects inherent in administrative structures of school districts as well as from social problems as they repeatedly adapt to new classmates and different neighborhoods. These circumstances create an almost insurmountable problem for migrant children as they attempt to obtain a quality education.

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 authorized a national program for disadvantaged children. As originally implemented, state and local programs failed to assist the special population of migrant children. This population was clearly included in the intent of the legislation. The oversight was not intentional; nonetheless, migrant children were excluded by virtue of the fact that they were not physically present to be eligible for inclusion into the programs that the local schools had developed. These programs were instituted to assist children who reside in the school district.

Just prior to the enactment of Title I, the Office of Education, HEW, funded an interstate taskforce on migrant education (1964–65). The Taskforce consisted of six states, California, Arizona, Oregon, Washington, Delaware, and Florida and was chaired by the State of California. The Taskforce reported that special efforts and programs were necessary for migrant children if the intent of Congress was to be realized in the national thrust to serve disadvantaged children. The report further stated that any and all efforts had to be of an interstate nature since the children's mobility meant that more than one state shared in the education of the children. Also, it was extremely important to the continuity of the education of the migrant child that an interstate system for the transfer of school records of the children be implemented to ensure the desired continuity.

Few states recognized the unique problems that migratory workers and their children posed to the educational establishment. Among the states acknowledging the presence of migratory workers and the needs of the school districts serving them were New Jersey and Colorado. Both of these states had enacted special provisions in their funding legislation that earmarked a modest amount for schools to pursue serving migrant children. Some states such as Pennsylvania had approved to augment the State aid that a school district received by $1 for every day that a migrant child was recorded as residing in the district.

Few states recognized the unique problems that migratory workers and their children posed to the educational establishment.

These efforts did recognize that migrant children presented unique situations to the school district in which they temporarily resided. However, very little was known about this special population of children to merit additional support.

On November 3, 1966, the Congress amended the Title I Act specifically to incorporate educational funding and services for migrant children (PL 89-750). This legislation specified that the Migrant Education program was to be a State Educational Agency (SEA) program, and that SEA's were to be the only governmental agency entitled to apply for and disburse funds. The law explicitly stated that if the State is unwilling or unable to conduct programs of education for migrant children or if other public or nonprofit agencies can more efficiently and economically conduct such programs, the Commissioner of Education (now the Secretary) was authorized to seek other agencies in the State to carry out the programs.

The emphasis on coordination of migrant programs continues to be the major theme in the current statute that re-authorized Migrant Education (PL 100-297). Thus, the national goal of migrant education has been focused on interstate coordination and cooperation in the development and implementation of project activities on a national basis.

Unique Program Activities

Central to the goal of interstate cooperation and in keeping with the mandate of Congress for the transfer of school records of migrant children was the development and the implementation of the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS). The system is a computerized network of communications designed to retrieve, store, and transmit the academic and health information of migrant children served by the program.

As a companion to the records information, the states undertook the challenge to design and implement a system by which the specific skills associated with the content areas of math, reading, oral language development, and early childhood development could be documented and transferred between states. In order to facilitate the assessment and proper placement of migrant children as they entered various state educational programs, the specific skills that the student mastered or were under study at the previous school had to be known to the new school. The skills system development was an intensive interstate effort involving many state and school district personnel.

Another Program activity is the Secondary Credit Exchange. One concern of migrant educators has been the abnormally high dropout rates among migrant students at the secondary level. With this project the migrant student can continue to pursue secondary credits in their home-base while residing in a receiving state. The student follows the same schedule of classes and course of study that they had in the home-base state. Credits earned are then transferred from the receiving school to the home-base school on an official school transcript. A variation of this program has taken the form of a correspondence program called PASS (Portable Assisted Study Sequence).

The whole mobility issue is one that has devastating effects not only on the students but on the schools as well. Large inter-city school districts are constantly experiencing this fact. Programs such as those that have been described in this chapter have applicability to school districts experiencing high turnover rates among their student populations. Mobility is an issue that merits national attention for all children.

Each project that is designed in migrant education is developed within the framework of the stated goal of migrant education: to coordinate programs and projects with similar programs and projects in other states. For the most part, migrant projects involve more than one state in their development.

The need for specifically designed educational programs that take into account the "culture of migrancy" is still great. Local education agencies, by nature of the fact that they were formulated to respond to the needs of populations of children residing within the confines of politically drawn boundaries, do not project their educational program development efforts beyond those boundaries. It is within this operational concept that migrant education works. Migrant education programs are intended to supplement local efforts to meet the unique needs of the mobile child.

Migrant education programs are intended to supplement local efforts to meet the unique needs of the mobile child.

Administration and Personnel

The Migrant Education Program is operated by the State Educational Agency (SEA). The State becomes the agency responsible for Migrant Programs. As the designated operational agent entitled to receive the funds, the State is authorized to expend program funds at the State level. This authorization to disperse funds at the State level distinguishes Migrant Education Programs from other compensatory programs.

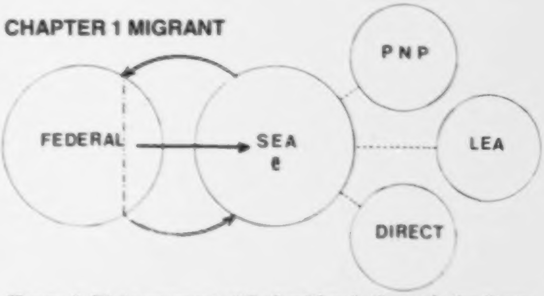

Figure 4: Disbursement of Federal funds through the State educational agency to private non-profit organizations (PNP), local education agency (LEA), or for direct operation (DIRECT).

Among the activities that states can conduct with program funds is the identification and recruitment of eligible migratory children. The state can expend program funds to conduct state-wide training programs, establish migrant education resource centers, enter into interstate contracts, develop resource materials, conduct assessments of program services, surveys and studies that are unique to enhancing programs for migrant students. These activities facilitate the state to take a strong leadership role in the education of migrant children. Programs operating at the local level are, in reality, extensions of the state program for the education of migrant children.

Administration of Recruitment Programs

The programmatic ethnography revealed three basic models of administration for recruitment programs. These basic models are as follow:

1. Exclusively state operated: recruiters are hired, trained, and supervised by state personnel.
2. Regional assistance with local control: state articulation of goals with regional service centers, but predominantly locally controlled.
3. Local recruitment system: general direction, policies come from the state, but control and decision-making rest at the local level.

These models represent global systems, and variations of each may be incorporated according to individual state needs. However, they do represent the basic organizational structures of identification and recruitment currently in operation. The State Administrator must be cognizant of the pros and cons associated with each system of operation. It must be clear at the state level that any system selected by the state administrator to conduct the I & R responsibility assumes all liability for program operation. This responsibility is implicit based on the fact that the State is the applicant agent of record with federal government.

The Recruiter

The recruiters are invaluable to the migrant education program . . . The recruiter is the link between the school and the migrant family, between the migrant family and the community.

Key to the success of any migrant education program is the migrant recruiter. The term recruiter is rarely used in the educational community at large. The process of recruitment evolved from the absence of data concerning migratory workers and their families. Transient populations have presented problems to demographers over the years resulting in sketchy statistical information of numbers and movement patterns. The schools did not have outreach personnel who could canvass the district for migrant students: so the term "recruiter" was initiated.

The recruiters are invaluable to the migrant education program. The impact that a recruiter has on the success of a program is great. The recruiter is the link between the school and the migrant family, between the migrant family and the community.

Migrant programs are developed depending on the number of migratory children residing in the area. Migratory movement patterns are not governed by the school year. Crop conditions, weather, and crop cycle dictate the movement. Someone needed to provide this type of information to the program planners and to communicate with migrant families. The recruiter filled this role.

The ethnography documented the following functions performed by the recruiters: outreach, link between the home and the school, advocate for the family, and enumerator. The recruiter plays the most important role of any employee in the migrant education program.

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If broken down into very compact terms, the migrant education program consists of five major parts:

1. Identification (determining presence and location).
2. Recruitment (documenting eligibility).
3. Needs assessment (determining the academic and health conditions of the child).
4. Services (the specific programs designed to meet the needs of the child).
5. Evaluation (assessing the effectiveness of the services).

The migrant education recruiter plays a very important role in the first two activities. He/she provides information to the third and becomes the key communicator between the school and the parent concerning the fourth activity. Performance is judged as part of the fifth component. It is not difficult to see the integral part that the recruiter plays in the total concept of migrant education.

Summary

This Chapter presented an overview of the programs that are available to migrant children. While the majority of these programs are supported by Federal funds, there exist programs for migrant children that are supported by State, local and private resources.

This chapter discussed the origin of the Migrant Education Program and its organizational structure. It presented unique features of the program such as MSRTS, the skill information service, the secondary program exchange and PASS. The three basic models of administration of recruitment programs were presented and explained. Finally the role of the recruiter was discussed. The chapter concluded that the recruiter's role is the most important of all staff members of the program. The ethnography identified several roles of the recruiter. It can be seen that the recruiter's role has changed radically from enumerator to the home-school-community liaison. This drastic change has major implications for the program.

While several educational programs and strategies have been devised to address the needs of migrant children, the drop-out rate for this population remains very high, about 50%. One possible explanation for the inability of public schools to keep migrant students in school is that most programs are addressing the needs of stable populations in urban areas. One of the findings of this ethnography is that the educational establishment at the Federal, State and Local levels needs to exercise its leadership and creativity in providing the kinds of services that will respond to the educational challenges of the children of the culture of migrancy.

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Chapter 8

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this book was to re-examine the raw data of the ethnography conducted as part of the Identification and Recruitment Contract of the Division of Migrant Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education. The data was re-examined to determined if the informants perceived factors that affected, positively or negatively, the performance of migrant children currently served by Migrant Education Programs. One of the immediate conclusions is that the accounts recorded in the ethnography and their interpretations suggest the existence of what we have called in this book **"the culture of migrancy."** We determined that such culture exists because there are behavioral patterns recurring throughout the three streams, reported independently by the ethnographers and occurring among people from different ethno/cultural backgrounds.

One of the immediate conclusions is that the accounts recorded in the ethnography and their interpretations suggest the existence of what we have called in this book "the culture of migrancy".

This book contains the primary results of approximately 3,000 hours of interviews with migrants in the United States. Some of the findings are not new, they have been conveyed by word of mouth by migrant education employees for many years. However, the importance of this book is that for the first time the word of mouth information has been scientifically confirmed. Also for the first time the perceptions of migrants about themselves and their relationship to society in general have been recorded and reported.

Ethnographic data are particularly powerful in pointing out where there are differences in the beliefs held by members of one culture and members of another culture. The data allow the reader to identify differences between the "ideal culture" (the way people say and believe they should behave) and the "real culture" (the actual behavior that can be observed). Ethnography is a useful tool for guiding policy development when that development must be based on reliable data on how a system works. It produces insight about people, when their lifestyles are not well known and differ from the ones commonly accepted by "our system".

The I & R ethnographic data allow the reader to identify a number of unique characteristics that were highlighted in each chapter and the unique needs that migrants have in relation to educational programs. It identifies some unusual issues, where the beliefs and behaviors of migrants differ in significant ways from the middle class, static population. It is the members of the "static" population who create and set policy for and manage the educational programs in the United States. These conflicting beliefs and behavior need to be highlighted. They are the areas where there is potential conflict, the possibility of failure of the system, and the need for serious policy development.

During difficult financial times, a common cost cure of school districts is to cut transportation and outreach. This solution to financial difficulties works for stable and easily identifiable populations. Children's basic education can survive the loss of a few field trips and a home visit or two. These are correctly seen as lower priority items. In contrast, the ethnographic data confirm that the people most in need of migrant education services are those who suffer the greatest loss of opportunity by a reduction in outreach services.

Migrants live in isolation even when they live in high density areas. The hours they work, their lack of knowledge of the local community, the absence of contacts in their networks (other than migrant personnel), and lack of transportation, all combine to put them at high risk of further isolation when outreach budgets are cut. Loss of outreach to them does not mean a cutback in field trips. It means the loss of their ability to participate in educational programs. A well meaning, open door policy will not meet migrants' educational needs. Only a very few will know where the school building is let alone find the door truly open.

In addition to coping with isolation, migrant children need special programs to help them overcome the educational and emotional problems created by moving through the migrant streams with their parents. These problems are well documented in the sections on migrant lifestyles. The children fall below grade level by leaving the home-base state before school begins and returning after it has ended. In the move from state to state the children are exposed to different curricula and different sequencing of materials. The authors suggest the creation of a national curriculum for migrant children and the provision of a national high school diploma. Expansion of receiving credits by examinations and the PASS program are highly recommended.

Migrant children suffer from the trauma of moving which lowers their self-esteem. The loss of self-esteem is due in part to their treatment by teachers, other students, and some school officials. Migrant children and their parents encounter language barriers. There are differences in the educational philosophy of the parents and the school; therefore, home-school discrepancies arise which are never addressed. Migrant children are enticed into the fields by the opportunity to earn money. At the same time they may be receiving negative sanctions from the educational system.

Conclusions

In concluding this book the authors would like to bring attention to several questions that have been raised in the national forum.

1. What are the demographics of the children of migratory workers?

Chapter 1 of this book has described the current demographic trends of the migrant population in the United States. The findings of the ethnography support the numbers and ethnic background reported by the MSRTS in 1989. The majority of migrant children are Hispanic of Mexican or Mexican-American extraction, Puerto Ricans, and Central Americans. The second largest group is composed of Vietnamese and other Asian-Pacific ethnic groups, and the third group by Black and White Americans.

2. What is the role of the State in providing migrant educational opportunities, including entry into all types of post-secondary education programs?

The data indicates that no one administrative model is appropriate for all migrant programs. Rather, there are several models. Ones that are best suited to the size of the State, the density and distribution of migrant and seasonal farm workers in the State, and the position of the State in the overall migrant stream cycle (home-base or upstream state, or some combination of the two) should be employed. At least three models have been identified for the identification of children: the State centralized model, the regional model and the local model. In terms of providing direct services, the reality of the Migrant Program is that the program loses its identity once the funds are allocated to the local schools. The Migrant Program becomes an itinerant teacher, a paraprofessional, a resource room or simply the transfer of records from one school to another. The study found that some programs that meet the recognized needs of migrant children exist. These programs have high visibility and strong migrant community support. There exist few programs that are poorly presented or lack features that meet the migrants perceived needs. The State should be provided with additional funds to continue educational services to migrant children. The Federal Government needs to articulate the parameters of the Migrant Education Programs so that services offered to migrant children by Chapter I Basic, P.L. 94-142, Bilingual Education and other entitlement programs are coordinated to avoid duplication. The ethnography reported the desire of many parents to have their children improve their education. The migrant parents felt that they themselves lacked the skills to provide assistance in instruction for their children. The use of computers and itinerant teachers might benefit the migrant family by providing educational assistance to the child and parents in the late afternoon when they have returned from the fields.

3. **Should Federal programs include incentives for private and State participation?**

If the Federal Government is to have a major role in providing migrant children access to the mainstream of society, it needs to provide incentives to private and public, technical schools and institutions of post-secondary education. Through incentives provided by the Federal Government, programs may be created to assist children to maximize their potential and develop skills to keep pace with their rapidly changing environment. One of the findings of the ethnography is the concern expressed by many migrants about the changing nature of agriculture. Mechanization in many areas has caused the loss of agricultural jobs. Migrant workers must be afforded the opportunity to continue to perform jobs in the fields if they so choose, but more knowledge is necessary. Technical knowledge such as the operation of sophisticated machinery is necessary, as well as information on the effects of pesticides on humans.

4. **How can migrant education, migrant health, migrant Headstart, job training partnership programs (HEP/CAMP) and adult literacy programs be integrated and coordinated at both the Federal and State levels?**

The lack of coordination or even the existence of programs and services was revealed in the ethnography. For example, the importance of a high school diploma or a GED was discussed on several occasions. In one case, the migrant was interested in obtaining a GED. However, the adult education program was closed due to lack of funds. In another instance, mothers had to go to the fields early in the morning (5:30 A.M.) leaving younger siblings under the supervision of older brothers and sisters until the bus arrived an hour later.

A discussion of availability of social services indicated that some states provide better services than others. The informants suggested that the choice to migrate to a specific site was influenced by medical services, programs for the children, and other services such as church related activities.

Migrants are sometimes affected by bureaucratic red-tape. An example from the ethnography is that of a family whose young child had contracted encephalitis and was now severely retarded. The two states in which the family lived had refused to provide medical insurance for the family.

The answer to this question lies in the agreement of what constitutes a "migrant" and in providing uniform services in all states. The ethnography clearly points out that availability of social services influences the move. Services should be provided by one agency that oversees the services provided to migrant workers and their families. Agencies should also arrive at a common definition of "migrant" as well.

5. How many migrant students are identified as potential drop-outs; how might this issues be addressed at the national policy level; and what effect does the migrant mother have on her children's performance?

The ethnography provides valuable information regarding the "culture of migrancy". The culture of migrancy fosters its own continuance and is, in many ways, counter-productive to education. The priorities are clearly established: availability of work, survival, housing, and moving. All migrant children are potential dropouts. If the children are needed in the fields for the family to survive, then that will take precedence over education or any other need the migrant child may have.

The ethnographers documented several factors that contributed to the success or failure of a migrant child in the educational system. These factors are: the support provided to the child, the child's decision-making power, and the child's economic contribution to the family.

Every child who successfully completed his or her high school education was supported by at least one family member. Sometimes it was a parent, equally often it was a brother, sister, aunt, uncle, cousin or grandparent. The child had to want to succeed, but at the same time there always seemed to be a significant other wanting that success for him or her.

There is also an economic support factor to be taken into account. Desire for success does not guarantee opportunity for success. One student was unable to go to college because there was no financial aid available.

Secondly, the decision-making power of migrant children must be considered. Even though there was always some support for the successful migrant student, the drop-outs had parents who tried to keep them in school. One of the most interesting discoveries, from the point of view of policy, was that the children themselves had the final decision of whether to stay in school or drop out. At the age of 15 or 16, many children were making as much money as adults working in the fields. For youth, money is a source of independence and social reward. If the choice is being treated as an adult and getting praise in one environment, or being criticized for falling behind, getting bad grades and being sent home in another; it is not too difficult to see why some migrant students opt out of school.

Migrant students make an economic contribution to the home. For most sectors of our society, children drain the family's financial resources. For migrants, working children may make the difference between mere survival and a successful season. For some migrant families the children either will be in the field or will contribute in some other way to the support of the family. A useful program for migrant children must take this into account.

One ethnographer suggested that it might be cost effective to pay migrant students when they reach high school age to attend school. The effect of this may be that migrant students would have their parents' support and retain the chance of getting out of the culture of migrancy.

6. How do migrant programs under this Chapter vary from State to State; how do their administrative costs

vary, how do parent involvement and services vary.

The ethnographers in the three streams documented that some of the important migrant education needs are not being met in all States. Dissimilar services exist within States, and there are significant differences between States in terms of availability of such basic services as day care or high school programs. Innovative and consistent programs and services are indicated to address the current and future needs of migrants. The Program needs clear guidelines of who is eligible for services. The programs at the State level need to be able to rely on the informed judgement of the U.S. Department of Education, rather than having every Department program officer give repeated warnings that their opinion is not binding or meaningful. The latter problem is a major contributor to poor administration and confusion of purpose for the Migrant Education Program nationwide.

There is a need for higher visibility and clearer identity for some parts of the Migrant Education Program. Many times the ethnographers found that children were receiving and benefitting from Migrant Education services, but the parents and/or children did not know that the services were provided by the Program. This means that the Program did not receive the benefit of the migrants' positive regard and did not receive feedback on how to improve the services offered.

7. How well are migrant handicapped and gifted and talented students identified and served; and what improvements might be made in this area?

As indicated in the review of the services provided to migrant children (Chapter 7) the services provided to handicapped and gifted and talented is minimal. This subject merits a study of ways special education services can be taken directly to the camps. Since many communities lack programs for the gifted and talented the question is: Should the state provide residential facilities for gifted and talented children while their parents are working the fields?

This section provides, at least, partial answers to questions that have-been formulated at the national level. The suggestions and comments provided herein are substantiated either by the ethnography or by a review of the literature. The intention of this book was to awaken the inquisitive spirit of policy makers. It is they who will define and design educational services to children who are part of the culture of migrancy.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on a reanalysis of the ethnographic data:

The Migrant Education Program should

1. redefine the role of the recruiter and provide the skills needed by this personnel to assume and complete the roles that they are expected to fulfill,
2. institute an itinerant teacher program which would go to the home and provide services to the children and their families,
3. design instruction appropriate for mobile populations, such as using the computer for instruction and exploring the possibility of long distance education via interactive video,
4. develop a national curriculum to meet the needs of migrant children, expand the offering of correspondence courses and approve a national high school diploma for migrant students that satisfies the requirement for graduation,
5. develop computer software that may enhance the skills of migrant children and adults
6. develop a mechanism whereby children with exceptionalities are provided with the services set forth by P.L. 94-142,
7. increase the efforts to coordinate services with other agencies,
8. increase counseling and cultural adjustment activities for all migrant children in school and in the community,
9. initiate an experimental program with selected institutions of higher education to prepare teachers that will serve the needs of children in the culture of migrancy,
10. commission a combined study to further define and explore the characteristics and consequences of the "culture of migrancy".

APPENDIX A

A. PROGRAMMATIC ETHNOGRAPHY OBSERVATIONAL DATA SET:

1. Examples of the daily routines of recruiters, recruitment coordinators, and any other individuals who are found to be critical to the I and R process.
2. Examples of weekly and annual cycles for the above individuals.
3. Job descriptions of recruiters, coordinators, etc. This is to include the formal job descriptions, plus the observational descriptions of what people actually do.
4. Key informant interviews on their philosophy of appropriate administration of recruiters, both from an administrative and the recruiters' points of view.
5. A domain analysis of major migrant recruitment issues.
6. Formal and informal organizational models of each of the states, with comparative data from other states.
7. Observations of paper work skills of recruiters, as well as their interpersonal skills.
8. Observations on the timing of programs; do they fit the migrant seasons, etc.?

B. PRIMARY QUESTIONS FOR THE PROGRAMMATIC ETHNOGRAPHY:

1. What are the characteristics of an "ideal recruiter?" This question was asked at all levels of the state organizations, from the State Director to the recruiters, and some interesting differences of opinion emerged that were built into the recommendations in the manuals.
2. What are the characteristics of the worst possible recruiter? This was also targeted for all levels.
3. How did you get involved in migrant education? (all organizational levels).
4. Where and how can migrants be found? What are the easy to identify locations and what are the most difficult to identify locations (and types of migrants)?
5. Who helps you find the migrants? Does anyone try to keep you from finding migrants?
6. What is the effect of the migrant program on the migrant child?
7. What are your ideas for the total recruitment process? (all levels).
8. What tasks/jobs assigned in addition to the recruitment duties go well with being a recruiter?
9. What tasks, duties, assignments interfere with the job of being a migrant recruiter?
10. What are the typical migrant work patterns in your

area and do they help or interfere with recruiting children into the program?

11. What are the migrant parents' attitudes towards the *migrant education program? (all levels).*

12. How important are the recruiters to the migrant education system? (all levels).

13. How much feedback do recruiters get that the migrants feel hassled by having to give the same information over and over to people from different programs?

14. What are the things that the migrant recruiters like about their jobs, and what do they dislike?

15. Where are the recruiters housed, institutionally; where are their offices located? What is the ideal location for the recruiters' office, and what is the worst possible location?

16. What are the tools a recruiter needs (e.g. transportation, phone, etc.)?

17. What areas of eligibility cause the most problems for the recruiters?

18. What are the special "gimmicks and goodies" that recruiters use to find migrants and to encourage their participation in the program? These can be disseminated to other areas to improve recruitment efforts.

19. How much do the recruiters act as an information and referral center for the migrant families?

20. Do you use different strategies to identify migrants for summer programs than for the regular school year program? What are the similarities and differences in the recruitment processes for the two types of programs?

These questions led to further questions, or to refinement of the existing questions, all of which resulted in the material provided for the development of the training manuals and other training materials developed through the project. These issues are summarized, and in more depth in Dr. Michael Reed's report, "The State of the Art: What We Have Learned From the "Programmatic" Ethnographies?" (Reed 1987).

The results of the programmatic ethnographies were then used to generate the basic framework for the observations, semi-structured question sets, and the life history data collected during the field based ethnographies with the migrant families. The initial questions developed by the various groups were as follows:

C. FOCUSED ETHNOGRAPHY OBSERVATIONAL DATA SET (INCLUDES):

1. Data on the daily routine of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, especially the "typical" activities en-

gaged in by adults and children.

2. Observations of recruiters for various programs (education and others) in the migrant camps and in migrant homes in home-base states.
3. Observations of migrants' interactions with various social service agencies, with the schools, etc.
4. Participant observation of the actual move from a home-base location to one upstream. Who does what, when do they do it, and what kinds of needs do the migrants have, and how do they accommodate those needs when they arrive?
5. Detailed descriptions of the roles children play both upstream and in a home base setting; especially their economic roles. When do the children start working in the field, how often are they used as baby sitters while the parents work, and what are the parents' expectations about their economic contribution to the family?
6. Participant observation of migrant field labor.
7. Observations of children's study habits, attitudes toward school, etc.

D. PRIMARY QUESTIONS DIRECTING THE FOCUSED ETHNOGRAPHY INTERVIEWS

1. What qualities do parents like to see in a recruiter?
2. What are the migrants' attitudes towards the various forms they have to sign?
3. Why don't the migrants ask more questions of the recruiters?
4. What needs to be done to get more migrants to participate in the parent advisory groups?
5. What would the migrants like in the way of services?
6. Why do the migrants move to the places they move to? What are the variables that surround their decision to move?
7. What part does economics play in the migrant lifestyle?
8. What kinds of problems do migrants encounter in moving, what are the advantages, and the disadvantages to the adults and to the children?
9. What are the migrants attitudes' toward education? Do they support it or do they create barriers that keep their children from getting an education?
10. What are the migrant children's attitudes toward education?
11. Who makes the educational decisions in the migrant family?
12. What does the migrant education program mean to the migrants themselves (adults and children)?
13. What are the parents' attitudes towards the schools (as opposed to education as an ideal)?

14. What are the children's attitudes towards the schools?

15. What do the children see as advantages and disadvantages of moving?

16. How do the parents find out about the migrant education program?

17. How aware of the migrant education program are migrants in general?

18. What do the migrants feel would be the impact of the elimination of the migrant education program?

19. Why, from the migrants' perspective, are we missing them in our recruitment efforts?

20. Do the parents know why information is being requested of them by the migrant recruiters?

21. What would it take to get the migrants to carry information with them so they would not have to be asked the same questions over and over again?

22. What is the predictability of the moves that migrants make? When do they know they are going to move, and when do they know where they are going to move?

23. Do migrants get turned off by the word migrant? If so, who and when?

24. Does the term home-base have meaning to the migrants? What kind of permanent contact points do the most mobile migrants maintain?

25. Collect interviews on several migrant "success stories." Find out how success is defined by migrants and get details on where it leads. Find contrasting "horror" stories.

Once the ethnographers were in the field for some time, they not only relied on these two preliminary sets of questions and foci for observations, they found new areas which were shared across the group to improve the ethnographies in each of the states.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Joseph O. Prewitt-Diaz is an associate professor of education at Penn State University, State College, Pennsylvania. He has worked extensively on migration issues and is also a practicing school psychologist, working primarily with bilingual and minority children. He presently directs the Bilingual Education Fellowships at the University and has worked extensively with the federal Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Affairs and is a Kellogg Foundation Fellow as well as a Woodrow Wilson Hispanic Fellow. Dr. Prewitt-Diaz has been a teacher, principal counselor and training specialist throughout his career and has published extensively in the areas of psychoeducational issues, and multi-cultural diversity in psychological assessment. "Jose" calls himself a "migrant", as he migrates each year between Pennsylvania and his native Puerto Rico.

Robert T. Trotter II is chairman of the Anthropology Department at Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona. Dr. Trotter has devoted much of his career to studying the factors and patterns of migrant lifestyles in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. He has done numerous studies on health patterns and cultural barriers to health care for migrant families for the federal Office of Migrant Health and has conducted research on ethnopharmacology and folk medicine. Bob is the architect of the National Identification and Recruitment Contract ethnographic study that provided the research base for this book.

Vidal A. Rivera, Jr. is the former National Director of the Migrant Education Program at the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C. Vic's career as the National Director spanned the first 16 years of the program's inception and development. Before his move to Washington, Vic spent many years as a teacher, a principal and the State Director of the Arizona migrant education program. For several years he hosted a television program on bilingual education for children on KPHO-TV in Phoenix. He was a member of an HEW Task Force on Migrant Education in 1964 which preceded the enactment of the Title I legislation which includes migrant education. He was the U.S. Department of Education's representative to the UNESCO conference on migration in Paris in 1972. Vic's vast experience in the legislative and historical foundations of the program have provided valuable information in the formation of this work.

This multi-cultural, psycho-educational, anthropological, legislative and historical look at migration and its effects on children is unprecedented. The unique perspectives and expertise these authors have provided will encourage and enable professional educators to make informed decisions regarding educational programming for migrant children. May this be only the beginning. . . .

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